

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

The Riddle Ring

Justin
McCarthy

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
50 EAST LAKE STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607
USA
978 0 226 00000 0
HARDCOVER
\$35.00
ISBN 978 0 226 00000 0

Cornell University Library
Ithaca, New York



THE CELTIC LIBRARY

PRESENTED BY

CLARK SUTHERLAND NORTHUP

CLASS OF 1893

The date shows when this volume was taken.

To renew this book copy the call No. and give to the librarian.

..... **HOME USE RULES**

..... All books subject to recall

..... All borrowers must register in the library to borrow books for home use.

..... All books must be returned at end of college year for inspection and repairs.

..... Limited books must be returned within the four week limit and not renewed.

..... Students must return all books before leaving town. Officers should arrange for the return of books wanted during their absence from town.

..... Volumes of periodicals and of pamphlets are held in the library as much as possible. For special purposes they are given out for a limited time.

..... Borrowers should not use their library privileges for the benefit of other persons.

..... Books of special value and gift books, when the giver wishes it, are not allowed to circulate.

..... Readers are asked to report all cases of books marked or mutilated.

Do not deface books by marks and writing.

Cornell University Library
PR 4964.M49R5 1897

The riddle ring, a novel.



0 13 519 800

olin



Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

THE RIDDLE RING

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

ON

THE RIDDLE RING

' "The Riddle Ring" is a good story, full of vivacity and ingenuity, which carry the reader pleasantly along. . . . The book is essentially a novel of plot and incident, and the mystery of the ring is quite mysterious enough to stimulate curiosity without torturing it.'—*Guardian*.

' Though a sufficiently tragic fate involves the villain, there is a brisk and cheerful pace about Mr. McCarthy's pedestrian muse. . . . The book is so brightly written, that one is not careful to inquire whether coincidence is pushed too far in the interpretation of the ring and its story.'—*Athenæum*.

' In "The Riddle Ring" Mr. Justin McCarthy gives us a good story, with a well-managed mystery at the centre of it.'—*Spectator*.

' Taken as a whole, "The Riddle Ring" is excellent of its kind, and the author's many admirers will read it with interest and pleasure.'—*Lady's Pictorial*.

' Every regular novel-reader will find her attention glued to the story, from dedication to colophon.'—*Times*.

' The story is of a thoroughly healthy and pleasant flavour ; full of touches of gentle satire and of pictures of men, women, and places that are, without effort, graceful and natural.'—*Scotsman*.

' Mr. McCarthy has told his story with the facility of a practised novelist ; he enlists the reader's sympathy in the first chapter and holds it unto the last.'—*Daily Chronicle*.

' Mr. McCarthy has the monopoly of sensation and quietness in his admirably thought-out novels. . . . The experimental philosopher and consummate rascal of this remarkably clever novel, Sir Francis Rose, is the best character portrait Mr. McCarthy has produced since he drew "The Comet of a Season ;" and the conduct of the story, largely accomplished by "talk," always vigorous and true to the type of the talkers, is highly artistic.'—*World*.

' Written with a cleverness that would render less sensational material interesting. . . . One may safely maintain that Mr. McCarthy is often bright and entertaining in the midst of difficulties that would have entirely overcome any ordinary writer.'—*Morning Post*.

' Mr. McCarthy lightly blends comedy and tragedy, and the result is a pleasantly moving and exciting romance. . . . The romance is one to be read in a holiday mood, and when taken up will not, we think, be easily laid down.'—*Daily News*.

' The story is admirably told, and there is not a page which is not full of interest.'—*Norfolk Chronicle*.

' An eminently bright and readable story. . . . Perhaps the best figures in the book are the two women. . . . It is in the delineation of them and of the hero that we see the light and easy touch by which Mr. McCarthy, as a novelist, has made his mark.'—*Glasgow Herald*.

THE RIDDLE RING

A NOVEL

BY

JUSTIN MCCARTHY

AUTHOR OF

'DEAR LADY DISDAIN,' 'CAMIOLA,' 'THE COMET OF A SEASON,'

'DONNA QUIXOTE' 'A FAIR SAXON,' ETC.



A NEW EDITION

LONDON

CHATTO & WINDUS

1897

Fo

RNELL
ERSITY
IBRARY

TO COURTAULD THOMSON.

MY DEAR COURTAULD,

You showed me the actual existing 'Riddle Ring,' told me the story of its chance discovery, and explained your reading of the letters and the figures on it. You suggested to me to start a story from the discovery. As the idea of a novel with this inspiration came from you, I think the least thing I can do is to dedicate the book to you.

Very truly yours,

JUSTIN McCARTHY.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. JIM CONRAD'S FIND - - - -	1
II. THE SLAVE OF THE RING - - - -	10
III. JIM'S NEW ACQUAINTANCES - - - -	19
IV. MR. ALBERT EDWARD WALEY - - - -	32
V. MR. WALEY'S CHIEF - - - -	41
VI. CLELIA VINE - - - -	48
VII. MR. MARMADUKE COFFIN - - - -	64
VIII. SOMEONE HAS BLUNDERED - - - -	76
IX. MR. WALEY AS RECRUITING-SERGEANT - - - -	89
X. 'I COULD HAVE LOVED YOU, BUT——'	98
XI. THE SWEET SORROW OF PARTING - - - -	114
XII. BACK TO LONDON - - - -	124
XIII. SIR FRANCIS ROSE - - - -	132
XIV. 'THAT LADY IS NOT NOW LIVING' - - - -	144
XV. 'WILL YOU STAND IN WITH US?' - - - -	160
XVI. A LETTER AND A MEETING - - - -	172
XVII. AN EPOCH-MAKING DAY - - - -	187
XVIII. JIM IS AN UNWELCOME MESSENGER - - - -	198
XIX. 'HAST THOU FOUND ME OUT, O MINE ENEMY?'	210

CHAPTER	PAGE
XX. 'THY KINDNESS FREEZES' - - -	226
XXI. 'WHY SUMMON HIM—AND TRUST NOT ME?'	237
XXII. WHAT MR. WALEY DID WITH HIMSELF - -	246
XXIII. WHAT THE CHIEF DID WITH HIMSELF - -	261
XXIV. 'WHAT IS TO BE DONE FIRST?' - - -	273
XXV. WHAT IS TO BE DONE NEXT? - - -	287
XXVI. A LEAP IN THE DARK - - -	300
XXVII. THE RING RETURNED - - -	310

THE RIDDLE RING

CHAPTER I.

JIM CONRAD'S FIND.

JIM CONRAD, a young Englishman lounging about Paris at the time when this story begins, found a ring which he at once assumed to have a mystery connected with it. It appealed to his young and romantic fancy, and it seemed to tell him that it had come in his way with a mission for him to fulfil, and perhaps even a story for him to tell. It clearly, as he thought, told a tale of a lovers' quarrel, and he was in the mood just then to sympathize with anybody into whose love a quarrel had pierced.

In any case, all stories about rings had a curious fascination for Conrad. There was the ring of Polycrates; there was Aladdin's ring; there was the ring of Amasis; there was the ring put upon the finger of the statue of Venus, and suddenly clasped and clutched by the enchanted marble. There was the ring with which the Doge used to wed the Adriatic. There was the ring that Pharaoh gave to Joseph, and there was the ring of Solomon, and Portia's ring, and the ring of Posthumus in 'Cymbeline,' and all manner of other rings in poetry, legend, and romance. Conrad delighted in all these rings, and was a devoted admirer

of 'The Ring and the Book.' How, then, could he avoid being impressed by the fact that a ring with an apparently mysterious story encircling it had come in his way, and invited him to unlock the heart of its mystery?

Jim Conrad was passing by the Arch of Triumph, the Arch of the Star, one morning in Paris, and entered the Bois de Boulogne. It was a morning in late summer or early autumn. Jim Conrad came to Paris just then because he wanted to have Paris all to himself. The Parisians would have gone away, and the English and Americans would not yet have come. There was only one piece being played at all the Parisian theatres just then, and that bore the name of 'Relâche.' Jim Conrad tried even to see the Venus of Milo at the Louvre, but on his first attempt he found that the gallery was closed 'for the business of repairs,' and he made no further attempt. 'Let it go,' he said, 'as everything else goes—for me.'

From which it will be inferred that poor Jim Conrad was in some mental trouble. So he was. He had come to Paris in order to relieve his mind by making it more miserable than ever, and brooding alone and lonely over his trouble. Alone and lonely may seem at first to the irreverent reader to be mere repetition and tautology. The irreverent reader, if he will please to devote his powerful mind to one moment's thinking over the subject, will see that he is entirely wrong. One may be alone without being lonely. We all find it healthy and satisfactory to be alone now and then; but to be lonely is the blood-poisoning of the soul.

Poor Jim Conrad was lonely. The girl whom he loved, or fancied he loved, had thrown him over and married a rich man old enough to be her father. Many a London young man no older than Jim would have taken this coolly

enough, and accepted it as part of his ill-luck. Girls will do these things—they do them every day—Fred to-day, George to-morrow, Arthur yesterday. And then, too, the lads sometimes throw over the lasses, as every wise man's son doth know. But, unfortunately, Jim Conrad had a fatal trick of taking things seriously. At least, he took things seriously where his heart and his affections were at all concerned. He was an odd sort of young man. He was decidedly good-looking—he was tall and well made, and wore his clothes with the unconscious way of one who has been born to show off clothes to advantage. He was great in all manner of games and sports, and was a capital amateur actor and manager. He was poor. He was the younger son of a younger son, and his own personal property amounted to five hundred a year all told—the money left him by his mother, who was dead. But he was determined to make his way in literature, for he had, from his college days, an inborn passion for literature, and he saw a great career before him—a career which had not yet quite begun. He had written nothing—at least, nothing for publication—but he meant to write. His friends had always said: 'Why don't you write something, Jim?' And he proposed with all the confidence of another Montrose to make the girl he loved—or thought he loved—famous by his pen. The girl, who had at first been taken by his face, his figure, his clothes, and his manners, did not care twopence about being made famous by his pen. She captivated an elderly millionaire, and she calmly threw Jim Conrad over. She told him in the very frankest way what she was doing, and why she was doing it. 'I should like very much to marry you, Jim. I would rather marry you than any other man if you had the oof; but, then, you haven't, and I don't believe you'll ever get it—and I can't

wait all my life—and I've got a good chance now with this old fool—and of course I am not an idiot, and I don't mean to throw my chance away. Perhaps he'll die soon and leave me a widow—and then I don't say that you and I may not arrange matters.'

Then Jim left her. He saw that he had thrown his time utterly away on her. He saw that she never could have been the woman he had supposed her to be. He found a great desert in his heart. To have loved and lost may be better than never to have loved at all, but to have loved and to find out that the object of one's love is not worth a single thought, even in the way of anger, is not a cheering experience to look back upon. That was Jim Conrad's condition when he went over to Paris to try for some way of distracting himself from the memory of his folly. He did not even carry self-respect along with him. How could he feel any respect for himself who had been taken in by a woman like that?

So he wandered listless through the Bois de Boulogne eating his own heart. He had come to Paris not merely because he was fond of Paris—although he was—but because he had had much of his bringing-up there, and he thought it would do him good to go back to the place which he had known before he knew her. In the mind of some men, and perhaps of a very few women, place and association go together like substance and shadow. There are men—there are certainly men; I will not vouch for women—to whom every place they know floats double—the place and its shadow, the association. Therefore, Jim Conrad, in his fancied distress—is there any fancied distress? does not the mere fancy make it real?—sought out his old haunts in Paris because they brought him associations of a happy, careless time before he knew her.

He strode over a high railing, and lost himself in an utterly unfrequented glade of the artificial wood. He wanted to go away even from the sound of feet, the sound of voices. He did not care to hear the nursemaids babbling to the children. Like all disappointed people, he was for a time a thorough egotist. He saw his own trouble in the grass, in the sky, in the crowd, in the solitude.

Suddenly, as he plunged along across the well-kept grass, he was called away from the thought of his own trouble by seeing a shining object on the turf before him. It was something that glittered at him out of the grass, and that in an odd sort of way seemed to appeal to him. He stooped and took it up. It was a ring—a thick, heavy ring of gold. It was apparently a ring of antique make and fashion. Naturally he looked round to see if anybody was within call who might have dropped it. No, there was no one anywhere in sight; he had the glade all to himself. Yet it was plain from the first that the ring had been lately dropped or thrown away. The night had been rainy, the early morning had kept up the rain. The ring was as dry as if it had been dropped on the Egyptian sands in front of the Sphinx, near the Pyramids. It was a ring which might have been worn by man or woman—a man with a hand at all slender could have worn it on his little finger; a woman who had not a hand too solid could have worn it on her middle or even her third finger. It looked more like a man's ring, certainly, it was so solid and heavy.

'Curious,' Jim thought, 'how anyone could drop so heavy a ring and not notice its absence from the finger to which it belonged.'

Anyhow, he took it for granted that the owner would soon come back to recover the lost possession, and as he

had nothing particular to do with himself, he resolved to wait until the owner came and gladdened his heart, or hers, by its restoration. So he lounged about, and sat on the grass, and leaned on the fence, and wove odd fancies about the ring. Two hours idled and slipped away in this dreamy fashion, and no one came to look for the ring—in fact, no one came near him.

Then an idea occurred to him. Was the ring dropped at all? or was it not rather thrown away? It pleased Jim to fancy himself already a writer of romance, and as such able to analyze human nature, and out of the merest glimpses of observation light up a whole story. So he set to thinking out a story, and nobody came near to interrupt his thoughts or to claim the ring. He settled down to the conclusion that the ring was thrown away, and thrown away by a woman. It was flung away in a woman's impatient burst of anger and scorn. It was a question of slighted love—of faith cruelly broken. It was the gift of a false lover. Oh yes, Jim felt quite sure the ring was thrown away by a woman. He felt that she must be young; he felt that she must be beautiful; he felt for the time as sure of this as if elderly ladies never dropped a ring, never threw away a ring, never were disappointed in their lovers—as if ugly women never had occasion to bemoan the perfidy of their pretended admirers. Other things being equal, one would naturally have thought the action of a woman disappointed in love would suggest a lack rather than a superabundance of attractions. But Jim just then did not choose to think it so. He saw Ariadne deserted by Theseus. Likewise, he convinced himself—and here his reasoning was more plausible, and even more sound—that a love affair of the purer order—love affair between the unmarried—was concerned, and not an intrigue of any

discreditable kind. There was, indeed, as will be seen, a third possibility, which did not then come into his mind.

He said to himself that no woman, disappointed in any scandalous intrigue, would throw away in a public place a ring which might afterwards come to be a *pièce de conviction* against herself. Such a woman might have thrown the ring into the Seine, but she would not have flung it recklessly on the turf of the Bois de Boulogne. No; the ring could betray nothing of which its wearer was ashamed. She was disappointed, and she did not care who knew it. Let it go—all!

Why might it not have been a man who threw that ring away? Suppose a man had been given a ring by his sweetheart, and she had proved false, and they had quarrelled, why might not he have flung it away there in the Bois de Boulogne? Jim reasoned this out, too. A man would not have been likely—so Jim reasoned out the case—to throw away a ring. He would probably have sent it back at once to the woman who had proved faithless, or he would simply have left it in his desk or in one of his drawers, and tried to forget all about it. What puzzled him a little was why, if the Bois de Boulogne was chosen for the flinging away of the ring, that particular spot should have been chosen.

Then an explanation occurred to him which fitted in with his theory of the deserted and disappointed woman, whose grief had suddenly flamed up in passion. The place in which he had found the ring was not a place where women would naturally walk. It could only be got at by scrambling over the railing and running the risk, no doubt, of official remonstrance and reproof from angry police authority. It would be very hard indeed for any woman, even if she wore the divided skirt, to scramble over

that railing; and why should an ordinary petticoated woman want to scramble over it in the broad light of day?

So Jim Conrad settled finally down to his conclusion that the ring had not been dropped, but that it had been thrown away. Some woman, standing on the other side of the railing, and without the least idea of crossing the barrier, had deliberately taken off the ring and flung it away—flung it as far as she could, from her hand, and from her heart, and from her life—flung it away in the sad and sickly hope that she was flinging memory, and disappointment, and disillusion along with it.

Then Jim began to study the ring itself more closely than he had done before. It had a number of letters beautifully enamelled round the outside, each letter in a different colour. Inside the ring were some figures in dark-blue enamel. The letters round the outside gave no indication whatever of where one ought to begin, in order to decipher the meaning—if any meaning they had. Jim, of course, assumed that they had a meaning; no mortal takes the pains of having letters enamelled on a ring if they have absolutely nothing to express. The letters ran thus, if one began at random—suppose with the letter C:

C.Y.O.F.A.R.A.A.T.N.I.C.S.I.O.S.R.

Not much to be made of that—at the first glance, at all events. On the inner surface of the ring were the figures 3,290, and following, with a little space between, 14,293. That was all.

Evening began to lower, and Jim left the place, taking the ring with him, and went home to his hotel. After a night and day of puzzling, he began to flatter himself—and he believed he had a special gift in the deciphering

of hieroglyphics—he began to think that a suspicion of meaning was dawning on him. His theory was that one must begin with the letter F, and take every alternate letter following, and by this process you get the name Francisco. Then you begin again with the second R, which was not used up in the ‘Francisco,’ and go backwards on the same alternating principle, and thus you get the name ‘Rosita.’ Francisco and Rosita—common names enough in Italian or in Spanish. This reading, to be sure, left two letters unaccounted for—the Y that follows the first C, and the A that follows the F, and which were taken in by neither of the names.

The figures, he took it, were dates written straight out. Clearly enough, they meant the third day of the second month of 1890, and the fourteenth day of the second month of 1893. The two unused letters—were they not simply the Spanish form of ‘Alas’ taken backwards? Here he could find no better solution. He had then got to this—that the ring symbolized some sort of love affair between a Francisco and a Rosita, presumably Italian or Spanish, or one Italian and the other Spanish; that the eras of the love affair were the third of February, 1890, and Valentine’s Day in 1893—three years and a little more; and that the ring bore melancholy evidence of something ill-omened in its short word of pathos or of despair.

What was the meaning of the zone of time, if such an expression may be used, which was indicated by the two sets of figures with their several dates? Why did the lovers’ era limit its enamelled record to the days between early 1890 and early 1893? Was that done in advance? Clearly it could not have been. Nobody, whether man or woman, would think of having a ring engraved with a funeral inscription in advance of love’s funeral. There are

those who have their gravestones cut and inscribed long in advance; but no one ever heard of a gravestone with the date imprinted in advance. No sane human beings would have thought of engaging themselves for three years and a few days, and no more. An engagement which was bound to last so long might surely be expected by the lovers to last until its very fulfilment. At least, that is how a pair of lovers might naturally be expected to reason out the question. Of course the two dates might have been meant to mark two stepping-stones in the love career—the day when the lovers first met, for example, and the day when they got married. But, then, why the syllable of despair? And why was the ring flung away?

Death, in its natural course, could have nothing to do with the tale. No one flings away a memorial of a beloved companionship cleft cruelly apart by death. Even misunderstanding, quarrel and rancour do not often survive a death. 'Dead, dead! That quits all scores,' says Meg Merrilies in 'Guy Mannering.'

CHAPTER II.

THE SLAVE OF THE RING.

JIM considered himself quite safe to put away any theory which brought death—that is, a natural and a lamented death—into the puzzle. But a death by crime? How about the possibility of a death by crime? Suppose a husband and wife had quarrelled—suppose it were a case of grounded or groundless jealousy—and the husband had torn from his wife's finger a ring which he had given her in happier days, and had killed her, and then flung the

ring away? Or suppose it were merely the case of such a quarrel between a pair of lovers, with the same result? But there remained the same impossibility of accounting for the syllable of despair. No man having killed his wife or his sweetheart would have been at the pains of commemorating the fact with the dates of lovership or marriage and the syllable of despair by an inscription subsequently engraved for the mere purpose of throwing the ring away.

The explanation in any case would have been inconsistent with Jim's fond belief that the ring was thrown away by a woman. Still, he said to himself that he was not going to leave any possible solution of the mystery untested merely because something might seem to conflict with a favourite theory of his own. A crime of some kind was quite possible. But he studied the papers for days and days, and he found no record of what we may call any appropriate crime. He found, indeed, two cases of suicide with somewhat corresponding dates, and he went to the Morgue to study for himself. But one was that of a red-faced and seemingly very drunken artisan in a blouse, and the other that of a poor half-starved little sempstress girl, whose wan and needle-marked fingers did by no means seem adapted to the wearing of that curious and costly ring. He made inquiry at the Prefecture of Police, but could hear of nothing. He did not, however, give up the ring. He utterly declined to shut himself out of the mystery altogether. He had already advertised in the Paris journals, stating that an English gentleman, who could be heard of by writing to certain initials at the Grand Hotel, had found a ring in the Bois de Boulogne on the date of the finding, and inviting the owner to claim the lost property. His appeal to the world in

general brought out no reply whatever. Yet it seemed almost certain—at all events, extremely probable—that the woman who had flung away the ring must still have been in Paris soon after he had picked it up in the Bois de Boulogne. He felt a strong conviction that the owner of the ring did not want to know anything more about it. But the ring bore the two names—assume that a woman had thrown it away, would not the date and the fact of a ring being discovered bring home some idea to the mind of the man whose name was interlocked with hers? Yes, certainly, if he were in Paris. But the theory of Jim Conrad was that the lover had left Paris—had deserted the girl in a new passion for some other woman—and that then she had thrown away the ring. Here, then, the theory would fit in well enough. One of the pair whose names were interlocked would not have the ring again; the other knew nothing about its rejection and its discovery.

Jim took the ring to several high-class jewellers in Paris, and endeavoured to get at some conjecture as to its origin and history. It was an old ring, they all agreed—the legend had been put on it within the last few years—the figures at a somewhat later time than the outer inscription. The opinion was strong, almost unanimous, that, despite the seeming evidence of the names, it was not an Italian or a Spanish ring. It certainly was not a French ring. Nor was it German, although it looked more like a German or Scandinavian piece of work than anything belonging to Southern Europe. One expert in the craft made a declaration which set Conrad's nerves thrilling. He declared his firm conviction that it was an English family ring. 'Then,' Conrad thought, 'the work of discovery, if that be true, becomes easier and easier. It

cannot be hard to find out in London the family history of such a ring. It cannot be hard to find out just now in Paris the names of any English people who may have been staying here at this unwonted time.'

Conrad had many friends in Paris; he had many friends especially at the British Embassy. Some of the young men belonging to the Embassy were still compelled to remain in town. Of these he made inquiries, but his friends could not assist him much. He could only ask them vaguely about English families who had lately been in Paris or were still there. They could only tell him of the Ronaldsons, who had run up for a few days from Dieppe; of the Strathsbys, who were going back to Scotland; and, quite inappropriately, of the delightful American girls who had stayed to the very last of the season, but whose mother had carried them away, no one quite knew where, several weeks ago. There was nothing satisfactory in this. Conrad did not want quite to give up his secret—to let it pass into other hands. He cherished it; he clung to it; it gave him a motive for living—which, as he thought, he sadly wanted. He began to forget his own trouble in studying out and striving to construct the story of his self-created heroine. An idea began to get hold of him. Why should he not make a story of it? Why not try his literary hand in that way? But he put the idea aside. Suppose the real heroine of the tale came to find that somebody had turned her and her misfortune into 'copy.' He could not bear the thought. No, it must be his secret alone—and hers, of course; but it must not be given to the big stupid public at so much a page. With the audacity of a novice in literature, Conrad did not contemplate the possibility of editors and publishers declining the completed copy with thanks. No; his

thought was of a story ringing in the public ear far and wide, becoming the talk of the day, and so at last reaching the ear and wounding the heart of the poor suffering and secluded heroine.

The more he brooded over the whole subject, the more the heroine became a real and concrete being to him. He thought very little about the lover, except that now and then he flung an execration along his undiscovered path. His theory was that the girl was young, that the man was much older—perhaps a married man who had passed himself off as single, and so won the girl's guileless affections; and the discovery came, and the ring was flung away. What, in any case, had all this to do with Jim Conrad? Were not his affections blighted utterly? What was it to him whether there was in the world one more disappointed being than he had known of before? Suppose he could find her out, what good could he do for her? He could hand her back her ring, of course; but, assuming that she had deliberately thrown it away, it did not seem likely that she would be very grateful for having it handed back.

Still, we are afraid that a disappointed lover, even in the early bitterness of his disappointment, is not the least likely of men to open his heart to a new sensation, even to the chance of a new wound. The actual fact is that Jim began to dream and moon about this imaginary heroine until he almost persuaded himself that he had been appointed by Providence to find her out and charm her grief away. All this was very absurd, to be sure; but, then, these romantic young men will be absurd sometimes—always.

Every day regularly Jim made a pilgrimage to the Bois de Boulogne, and hung about the spot where he had found

his perplexing possession. The idea was in his mind that if the owner of the ring should still be in Paris she might be tempted to haunt the place with which she had such melancholy associations. The impulse of most people is to avoid such a scene—but it is not the impulse of all. There are some who have the ghost's faculty highly and morbidly developed in them, and cannot keep themselves from revisiting a scene of suffering. It would be more like a man than like a woman, Jim thought, to haunt the grave of a buried happiness, but still there might be women too who would do it. This woman might be one who would do it.

So he went to the place every day, and lingered there and watched every woman, and, indeed, every man, who passed the railings, and who gave any glance, however short and sudden, in the one particular direction.

But no one stopped there, man or woman—nor did any woman who passed give him the idea of a heroine and a tragic story. He was so often there, lingering about the same place, that he began to recognise faces of men and women who appeared to be regular passers-by there—and, indeed, people began to notice him, and more than one *sergent de ville* appeared to take a deep and curious interest in his movements, or, rather, in his lack of any particular movement. But he haunted the place, all the same, and let authority form any suspicions it pleased.

Jim got into a way of sitting up late in his bedroom of nights, studying the ring. He used to set it before him on his table and survey it, as though by constant turning it over and over he could get at the heart of its mystery. He thought of wearing it publicly on his neck-tie, and thus offering it on exhibition and seeing whether somebody would not claim it. But here, again, came in the pos-

sibility of hurting the soul of the fair sufferer. If she were still in Paris, and happened to see her ill-gifted ring thus published and blazoned forth by a stranger, what would her feelings be—her sense of desecrated grief? No; that expedient could not be tried. In any case it would probably come to nothing. The advertisements in the papers had not procured him one single question, answer, or suggestion of any kind.

Jim began to grow tired of Paris, and to think he had better be going back to London. He ought to get to work of some kind, he told himself. He must not let his life drift idly by, he said to his fighting soul. All the time there was in his mind the unacknowledged anxiety to show the ring to some of the great London jewellers, and find out from them whether it was of English make, and whether it would be possible to get at anything about its family history—supposing such history to belong to it. He had little difficulty in reconciling his conscience to the fact that he was keeping a ring which did not belong to him, and which, no doubt, he ought to have handed in at the Prefecture of Police. An Englishman in Paris, as a stranger not domiciled there, does not attach any particular sanctity to the supposed rights of the authorities over treasure trove. Conrad's mind followed the ring into a dusty collection of labelled articles, such as one may see in the Lost Property Office in Scotland Yard—umbrellas, parasols, ladies' purses, opera-glasses, and such-like, and he saw the interesting ring lying there unclaimed for ever—of no use to anyone, even the owner. No; he felt that he, and no one else, was for the moment the rightful heir to the ring he had found. He would look out for the owner in a thoughtful and a delicate way, and would know how to act if a chance should arrive. The police authorities

would not trouble themselves in the least about the business. The lost ring would have no more meaning for them than a lost walking-stick or a dropped garter.

Sometimes he became possessed by a fear that he had either lost the ring or was destined to lose it. He bought a little blue silk bag, and in that bag he stowed his treasure of nights, and tied up the silver string about the neck of the bag, and hid it under his pillow with his watch. More than once in every night he waked up and felt for the bag and assured himself that it was safe, and sometimes got up and lit his 'bougie,' and took the ring out to make sure that no thief, clever as one whom Herodotus tells of, had stolen into his room, and stealthily got the bag from under his head and taken out the ring, and put the empty bag back into its idle place.

The whole story—his imagined story—began to get on Jim Conrad's nerves. It was growing to be quite a reality for him. Perhaps the morbid state of his mind, caused by his recent disappointment, had a great deal to do with his earnestness about this other disappointment, which in no wise concerned or could concern his life. He was, in fact, that most susceptible and irredeemable of all creatures—the poet who does not write verses. He had all the attributes of the poet, except the capacity to work off his trials and sufferings in poetry. The genuine poet has an immense advantage in that way. As soon as the first shock of any trouble is over, he sits down and works off his agonies in verse, and he reads over his poem and corrects and improves it, and puts its rhymes and rhythms right, and by the time he has come to the end of the process he has pushed his pain a good distance away from him. But Conrad was not in the way of writing poems, although he had felt all a poet's self-created passion for his false true-

love, and he had not that way of working himself out of his misery. So he took to this story of the ring, and he realized it, and made it part of his constant preoccupation, until it became something like a torture to him.

‘I will go back to London,’ he said to himself resolutely. ‘I will go back to-morrow, and I will see whether some London jeweller can’t give me a hint which may help me to the family history of this ill-gifted ring.’

So he took what he told himself should be his last tramp to the place where he had found the ring, and he explored the ground once more. No new revelation was vouchsafed to him, but he was once again confirmed in the opinion which he had formed after many days of careful observation—that no woman ever got over those railings. Such a performance would have created quite as much consternation as if a woman had walked into one of the lakes. That was something to encourage him in his quest. If the ring was worn by a woman—and it could hardly have been worn by a man—it was not dropped, it was not lost: it was thrown away.

Jim was staying at the Grand Hotel. The days were telling on Paris, and the English and Americans were already beginning to come in. The *table d’hôte* hitherto had been a very dull business for him. He had not spoken to a soul on either side of him. This day, he thought to himself, would be his last, and he was glad of it, because of the English and Americans who were beginning to come in, and whom he would fain avoid in his egotistic, misanthropic, and misogynist mood of mind. He returned to the Grand Hotel, and sat at one of the little tables in the court-yard, and smoked a cigar and drank a *petit verre*. A carriage drove past his table, and he saw two ladies get out—an elder and a younger. There were heaps of luggage

on and in the carriage, and there was quite a little commotion of clerks, porters, page-boys, and other attendants, round the carriage and the ladies and the luggage.

CHAPTER III.

JIM'S NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

CONRAD looked on in a lazy, half-awakened sort of curiosity. The younger lady got out first, and really all he saw of her was a dainty little foot in the prettiest of high-heeled shoes, and the foam of some gauzy petticoat-work just above. The foot was so small and dainty and neat that Conrad at once set down its owner as an American girl. But the girl helped her mother out, and they talked to the attendants, and by their accent Conrad knew that they were English—even that they were Londoners. He became interested now, and he saw the face of the elder lady quite plainly, but the young woman still kept her veil down. They disappeared at first into the office of the hotel, and then they crossed the courtyard and went up the flight of steps. So they vanished, and in five minutes more Jim had ceased to think about them.

But he had not seen the last of them—not by any manner of means. When he got to his place at the *table d'hôte* in the evening, he found that there had been some changes. A good many new arrivals were visible. His next-door neighbours, a very heavy Belgian gentleman and his wife, had apparently taken their departure.

There were new faces on either side of the table, and next to him were the two ladies he had seen in the courtyard—mother and daughter, as he at once assumed them

to be. He had seen the elder lady's face very clearly, and this was she. The daughter was seated next to him. He cast some shy glances at her, and he actually caught her sending a shy glance at him.

She was a pretty young woman, and her voice sounded musically in the lonely ears of Jim Conrad. He had been leading a very solitary life lately, and had not spoken to a woman for ever so long—at least, as it seemed to him—in reality for perhaps about three weeks. So he felt as if he should like to talk to the girl and to her mother—yes, positively also to her mother; for he felt that the talk of bright and pleasant women would cheer him up somehow. An occasion soon presented itself. He passed the pepper to the girl, or rendered her some other such momentous and heroic service, and she thanked him in words, and still more with a glance from her sparkling eyes. Then they got into conversation, into which the mother almost at once put her word.

They were decidedly very agreeable people, the mother and daughter, and they came from London. Like all Londoners abroad, they soon began talking of people they knew at home. Londoners are the most thoroughly provincial creatures in all the world, for they are hardly ever interested in anything but the concerns of their own province. The two women soon found that they and Jim had some acquaintance in common at home.

Then the girl asked him if he didn't like the Gaiety, and he said oh yes, he adored the Gaiety, although he did not add that he seldom went there; and the mother hoped that he was fond of the opera, and he proclaimed himself a devotee of the opera, to which he hardly ever went.

Will falsehood of this kind be recorded against us at the Judgment Day? Is one morally responsible for anything

he says in the effort to start conversation with people whom he has not met before, and whom he is anxious to talk to? After all, a man might adore the Gaiety, and yet not happen to go very often to the shrine of his adoration, and might be devoted to the opera without being ready always to pay a guinea for his stall.

‘Are you fond of novels?’ Jim asked the daughter at a chance pause in the conversation, and when he felt that he must start something new.

‘Oh no!’ she answered, opening round eyes at him, and then dropping her eyelids with a decisive air. ‘I hate novels!’

‘Hate novels! Why on earth do you hate novels?’

He was himself inspired with the hope of being a novelist some time or other, and this declaration damped him.

‘I hate novels—yes—because they give false views of life.’

She opened her eyes at him widely again.

‘But tell me: how are they false views of life?’

‘Everything ends happily or everything ends tragically, and that is not so in life. In life nothing ends at all.’

‘Come, now; life itself does——’

‘Yes; but generally in some humdrum and undramatic way. I don’t call that ending. In life things are mostly commonplace, monotonous, and dull.’

‘Very well; assuming that you are right, is not that one more reason for our desiring a life of fiction, which shall not be commonplace and monotonous and dull?’

‘Oh no; I want to have the truth, and nothing but the truth.’

‘Don’t you like fairy-stories?’

‘Given as fairy-stories—about the Prince changed into

a cat, and Beauty and the Beast and the ogre, and the "Arabian Nights," and all that—oh yes, to a certain extent, just as I am amused by the absurdities at the Gaiety. But given as a picture of real English life, no, most certainly not. I look on such stories as I should on a map or a Bradshaw if it had all its boundaries and figures wrong.'

'Decidedly,' thought Conrad, 'this is a flower of our very latest civilization. This is Girton and all the rest of them expressed in one dogmatic little mind.' But he liked the talk, all the same.

'My daughter takes very strong views about fiction,' the mother said, with a smile. 'But she can't persuade me to give up my novel-reading. I am quite unlike her; I am fond of any novel that is at all good. I think a good novel so brightens life for us.'

'Oh no,' the girl interposed; 'it darkens life, confuses it, bewilders our very instincts; tells us nothing but lies about life, about the very thing of which we want to know the truth.'

Conrad was amused, and was determined to draw her out.

'But come,' he said; 'I want you to give me your idea as to the want of truthfulness in fiction.'

She laughed a merry little laugh.

'Truthfulness in fiction,' she said. 'Why, there you have settled the whole question. How can there be truthfulness in fiction? If it is truthfulness, it can't be fiction; if it is fiction, it can't be truthfulness—don't you see?'

'You have caught me with an epigram,' he answered; 'but I must defend my position, all the same. A story may not describe the literal facts known to anyone's actual experience, but it may be a very good, and even a very faithful, picture of life, for all that.'

‘So I always say,’ the elder lady chimed in.

‘But that is what I say the novels are not,’ the pertinacious damsel insisted. ‘I say they are utterly unlike real life in every way, and that their whole purpose and business seem to be to make us believe that life is something quite different from what it really is. You might as well bring up a girl on the principle that dancing is the real business of her life.’

‘Many girls are brought up on that principle.’

‘So I say—that is my case,’ the argumentative young woman persisted. ‘But do you approve of that? Would you have girls brought up in that way?’

She looked at him as seriously as if she were the mother of a family of girls, and he were an elderly legislator.

‘No,’ he said, ‘I don’t suppose I should. I haven’t very much considered the question of the education of girls. But I don’t see how that affects the value of a novel. Novels, so far as I know, don’t teach us that girls ought to be brought up only for balls and dancing.’

‘No; but’—and she stopped and shrugged her shoulders with an air that plainly denoted that if she might she would have said, ‘How stupid you are!’ or ‘How stupid men are!’—‘don’t you see that the novelist teaches a principle of life just as false as the very lesson which you admit you condemn? Take the one great falsehood—the novelist teaches that the only important thing in life is for a man and woman to fall in love.’

‘Yes,’ he said, a little slowly, some thoughts about his own life coming up cheerlessly to his mind; ‘and isn’t it a matter of some importance in life?’

‘Not the least in the world,’ she declared promptly. ‘What does it count for in the real work of life? For a man nothing at all—no, nothing at all.’

‘Oh! but pray excuse me——’

‘I know—I know what you would say, and, of course, for a while all young men think it a very serious business. But how does it ever affect the serious part of their lives? For women it is a little—not very much; for men it is nothing at all.’

‘This young lady has been disappointed,’ Conrad thought. ‘Either she has never found a lover’—and glancing round at her pretty face, now a little flushed by the heat of the argument, he fancied that was not quite likely—‘or she has found the lover unworthy, and she tries now to argue herself into the belief that love counts for nothing in human affairs.’ For, indeed, she did seem as if she were not so much arguing with him as arguing with herself—perhaps arguing down herself.

‘Do you know,’ he said, ‘I have read some French poem or ballad or something which says that in the world there is nothing but that.’

‘Nothing but what?’ she asked disdainfully.

‘Well, of course, nothing but love.’

‘That is just the kind of sentimental nonsense a French poet would write.’

‘He says that it is the one thing which is higher than the stars, greater than the sun, stronger than the sea.’

‘What nonsense—what utter nonsense! Why, at the very most, love is an episode, an incident. Look at all these people here: how much do you suppose love has to do with any of their feelings and their ambitions, and their hopes, and their fears, and all the rest of it?’

‘I would venture to say that it either has or had a very great deal to do with the feelings of every creature here, man or woman, young or old.’

Conrad was now throwing his soul into the discussion.

She smiled contemptuously.

'I am sure it has nothing to do with my life, or my hopes, or my fears,' she said.

'Well, you are very young; you have not begun yet. Your time will come.'

'Oh no, it will not. And, then, there's mamma; she had never any love-trouble in her life—had you, dearest?'

It was a little disappointing to be referred thus directly to mamma on the delicate subject of love-troubles. The mamma was a very good-looking, lady-like person of about forty-five, with a sweet and gentle expression; but, still, one would not naturally turn to her for a discourse on the troubles of love.

'My dear,' she said gently, 'you talk too fast and too carelessly——'

'Oh no, please don't say that,' Conrad interposed.

'But my daughter is right enough; it does so happen,' the mother went on composedly, 'that I never have known anything about love-troubles. I was married at the desire of my people when I was very young to a man much older than myself, for whom I had both esteem and affection, and he died not many years after our marriage, and I was very sorry for him—and that was my only love-trouble; and I don't suppose it was exactly what the poets would call love, or what my daughter thinks the novelists set out for us as the great business of our lives.'

Conrad was a little embarrassed for the mother when the impetuous daughter so suddenly appealed to her for her experiences of life and love. But he thought it would not be possible for any lady to get out of the difficulty with more grace and sweetness. He began to like them both.

'I am afraid I have got the explanation of your views

of life,' he said to the girl. 'Your mother has, on the whole, passed an untroubled existence, and you think that all life is like that.'

There was a touch of hypocrisy about this speech, for he was thinking all the time that while the mother told her simple story there was something in her tones and in her eyes which seemed to say that she would have parted with some of that quietude of life and reciprocal esteem for even a little of the rapture and the trouble of love. But he could hardly suggest this to her or her daughter, and so he made to the young lady his hypocritical little speech.

'No,' the young lady answered decisively. 'Mamma, for all her novel-reading, has seen life in its true proportions. I think the novelists have done a world of mischief by their absurdly false teaching.'

'So if ever you start a republic of your own, you will have no novelists allowed to become citizens?'

'Like Plato and the poets. Didn't he propose to shut all poets out of his Republic?'

'I believe he did,' said Conrad modestly.

He was a little alarmed at the contiguity of a young lady who knew anything about Plato, but it was open to him to hope that she had read the philosopher only in her brother's cribs.

'Then, I should certainly do the same with novelists,' she said, smiling; 'at least, until I had taught them how to write about life.'

The dinner came to an end, and the young lady began gathering up her handkerchief, her fan, and her gloves. They exchanged bows. Jim walked behind them out of the dining-room, and presently they all found themselves in the lift together.

‘Will you come into our sitting-room and have a cup of coffee with us?’ the elder lady graciously asked. ‘I should like to talk to you about our friends the Draymonts—indeed, they are relations of mine, or, at least, of my husband’s—and I have not seen them for some time. We have not been in London very lately.’

Jim was only too delighted to accept the friendly invitation. He had not known very well what to do with his evening, and it would probably have ended in his going up to his bedroom and smoking a cigar or two, and reading languidly a yellow-coloured novel, perhaps by Paul Bourget, or for a lighter mood Richard O’Monroy, and having his attention always distracted by a mental recurrence to the particular riddle of life which was occupying his mind just now. It was very pleasant for him to go and have a talk with these two women. He had told them his name, and they told him their names. They were Mrs. Morefield and her daughter Gertrude. Mrs. Morefield had often heard of Conrad through her husband’s relatives, about whom she spoke, and was even sure that she had in her earlier days known Conrad’s mother. Conrad had vaguely heard of Mrs. Morefield as a beneficent lady of large means. So that an acquaintanceship was already established, with a fair promise of its blossoming into a friendship. There could be nothing very dangerous in a friendship where the young lady concerned had set her soul against love.

Conrad, however, was not thinking of all that. He was only thinking that the two women were very agreeable, and that he was spending a very pleasant evening, thanks to them.

They had a very pretty sitting-room, which they had already pulled about and redecorated to please themselves,

and which, they told him, they purposed still further to pull about and redecorate next day, until they had ejected from it every appearance of a commonplace hotel room, and made it like a home that they could love.

‘Are you staying here long?’ Conrad naturally asked.

‘Our stay is uncertain,’ Mrs. Morefield answered, in a half-melancholy tone. ‘We are going to take charge of a friend.’

‘An invalid?’ the young man asked sympathetically.

‘Oh no, not in the common sense of the word—a friend who has been suffering a good deal of late.’

Miss Gertrude suddenly interposed.

‘Dear mamma, Mr. Conrad won’t care to hear anything about family stories.’

‘My dear, this isn’t a family story.’

‘Well, it’s a sort of a family story, and I am sure he would not care to hear it.’

Conrad felt a little abashed—snubbed, somehow—he could not tell why. What was the reason why he should be supposed to be cut off from all sympathetic interest in the lives and sufferings of his fellow-creatures?

‘Why shouldn’t I be interested in this story, Miss Morefield?’ he asked courageously.

‘Well, I don’t want you to be interested in it.’

‘Why not?’

‘Because you said you are going to write novels, and I don’t want any true story that concerns any of my friends to be put into any novel.’

Conrad smiled. It amused him to think how every woman fancies that some commonplace tale of suffering she has heard of or known of would enchant the reading public if moulded into a novel.

‘I see you have a good many photographs here,’ he said,

for the sake of turning the conversation. 'You are fond of photographs?'

'Photographs of my friends—yes, if they are good likenesses—I only care for what is true in life.'

'But you are fond of art?'

'Oh no; I hate it! Art—the thing they call art is all falsehood; it only serves to turn the minds of men and women away from the true ends of life.'

'Yes?—and what are the true ends of life?'

'Helping one another—nothing more. Helping one another to be brave and true and helpful to others, and so to be happy.'

'Come,' thought Conrad, 'this is indeed a terrible little woman.'

'May I look at some of the photographs?' he asked.

'Oh yes, of course,' the mother said.

Miss Gertrude said nothing; she made no objection.

'Now, that is a beautiful photograph,' Jim said, studying one that was standing in a pretty little frame of its own on a small table.

'It is generally considered so,' Gertrude said coldly. 'I brought it down by mistake; I don't generally keep it here; I keep it in my own room.'

It was the face of a young woman apparently about the age of Gertrude herself. It was a beautiful and melancholy face. It was a rather long face, with deep, appealing eyes under long lashes, and a mouth which seemed to quiver with sensibility. Conrad felt certain that the original of the portrait had a pale face and delicate skin.

'I shall bring down some other photographs,' the girl said, and she hurried away, taking that one particular photograph with her.

'My daughter has odd views of life,' Mrs. Morefield

said, with a half-melancholy smile. 'She has taken up with many of the new ideas about what woman ought to be and to do, and about the degradation of her being a mere satellite or planet of man.'

'Oh, she will get over all that, Mrs. Morefield,' Conrad cheerily hastened to say. 'She is far too pretty and attractive a girl to be allowed to hold such views of life for very long, you may be sure.'

'Please don't say anything like that to her, if you don't want to offend her mortally.'

'Which I don't.'

'Very well; then, don't say anything like that to her. It makes her angry to have it suggested that woman's business in life is falling in love and being married. To tell you the truth, she has been rather encouraged in her ideas by the story of a young friend of hers—her friend from schoolgirl days—who was very romantic, and chose to fancy herself in love, and was—well, was disappointed. The story was not a common story, but—well, of course it would not interest you. I suppose nothing is very uncommon in life. We have come to Paris to meet her. Hush, please!'

For the daughter had come into the room again.

Conrad learned from the conversation they had that the health of the elder lady was very poor, and that she could never stand a London winter. So they lived abroad here and there for the greater part of their lives. They wintered on the Riviera, they wintered in Sicily, they wintered in Egypt. They were going, they thought, this season to pass the winter in Algiers. Mrs. Morefield gave a significant glance at Conrad as she told him this, and he felt quite satisfied that they were going out to Algiers to accompany or to meet the love-lorn young damsel of

whom she had spoken to him. Yes, they never passed a winter in London, or anywhere in England.

'I think you are very happy to be out of England in the winter!' Conrad exclaimed.

'It is a dreary life for Gertrude,' Mrs. Morefield said.

'Mamma!' the girl exclaimed, with a ring of anger in her voice.

'Well, I know you would not admit it, dearest, but it is hard for a young woman to be out of all the society to which she naturally belongs, and to be for the greater part of her life a stranger to her own country.'

'But, dear mamma, you know I don't believe in any of that nonsense about one's country. Men and women are brothers and sisters all the world over, and why should it matter where they were born? An Algerian is just as much to me as an inhabitant of Belgravia or Bloomsbury or anywhere else you like. The question of nationality is an antiquated heresy.'

'When you form your republic, you will shut that out too?' Conrad said, with a smile.

'Absolutely,' she answered, with resolute eyebrows.

Conrad kept wondering in his own mind how much of this principle of hers was founded on a determination not to let her mother know that it was any trouble to her to live in almost perpetual expatriation. He had formed his opinion of the pair of women already.

Jim Conrad sat in the balcony of the courtyard of the Grand Hotel that night smoking a cigar. He was naturally in a somewhat pensive mood. His treasure-trove in the Bois de Boulogne had, however, to some extent distracted his thoughts from the painful memory of his false true-love. He was vacuously watching the carriages roll in which brought the visitors from railway-

stations, and from the few theatres which were already beginning to open their eyes one after another, like hibernating animals, only that the sleep was through summer, and not through winter.

A little voiture rattled up, and a tall, youngish-looking man leaped out. Conrad saw at the first glance that he was an Englishman. He paid for his carriage, if we may put it so, in fluent French, with a strong English accent. Then he ran rapidly up the steps, and took a chair near to Conrad in front of the flower-pots, and looking down on the courtyard.

He drew out a cigar-case, took a cigar, and fumbled in his pockets for a match-box. Conrad produced his match-box and handed it to him. An acquaintanceship at once sprang up. The new-comer wore a light tweed overcoat with a cape. He threw back the coat on settling down, and showed a dress-suit—London evening pattern—underneath. He had on his head a gray tweed fore-and-aft cap. He did not, to Conrad's critical eye, look quite a gentleman, but he certainly seemed to be a man accustomed to the ways of gentlemen. His style appeared just a little pushing, but he was quite self-possessed.

'Travelled a good deal, I should say,' Conrad thought.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. ALBERT EDWARD WALEY.

CONRAD had, without the least excuse for any such conviction, made up his mind of late that a great career was to open for him in fiction. The adventure of the dropped ring, if we do not vulgarize his experience by naming it in

the same words as those which describe the once familiar dodge of the London streets, had impressed him with the idea that he had a destiny in that way. So he was always looking out for the materials of a possible story. It was, of course, to be a good deal about himself; and he had some thought when he first came to Paris of showing up his false true-love in a way that she and she only would understand, and so driving her on to a late repentance. But the finding of the ring had taken away his attention somewhat from that purpose of mere revenge. So he was looking just now rather to the outer world for his materials, and when he saw the new-comer get out of the carriage in the courtyard, it suddenly occurred to him that something might possibly be done with that new-comer.

He was a little put out by the manner in which the new-comer acknowledged the courtesy of the proffered match-box.

‘Thanks, old chap, was the form of acknowledgment. ‘I see you are a Briton, like myself.’

Now, it is an extraordinary, and, indeed, an altogether inexplicable, fact that the most patriotic Englishman never cares to be set down in Paris as obviously and unmistakably English. So Jim Conrad only answered coldly:

‘Yes, I am an Englishman.’

He did not ask himself why, as he had already condemned the other man to be English, the other man should not in his turn condemn him to be English.

‘Couldn’t do better, could you?’

‘Certainly not,’ Jim said, his native pride returning.

‘Been long in Paris, sir?’

‘Few days only,’ Jim replied.

He was not much in a humour to be talked to about nothing, and he did not now particularly like the ways

of the new-comer; there seemed no promise in them now.

‘Been here before, no doubt?’

‘Oh yes, several times; was partly brought up here.’

‘So was I. Lord bless me! what a raw lad I was when I first came to Paris!’

‘Well, we most of us begin Paris pretty early,’ Conrad said.

He was rather softening; there was something good-natured and cheery in the sound of the man’s voice.

‘So we do, so we do; and the Americans, too, don’t they? I have often said to myself, “What would Paris do, only for the English and the Americans?”’

‘I have sometimes thought,’ Jim said, ‘that Paris would do a great deal better if the English and the Americans never came near her.’

‘No, you don’t mean that? Ah, yes, I see now—raising the prices and all that, and encouraging all sorts of swindles and dodges. Well, I dare say there is something in that, now that you call my attention to it.’

As a matter of fact, Jim had not called his attention to it, but he was willing to admit that his new acquaintance had interpreted his meaning fairly well.

‘Yes,’ he conceded, ‘I think that between us—the English and the Americans—we have done a good deal to spoil Paris.’

‘Lord bless us! you’re quite right. Why, I am old enough to remember the Court of the Second Empire—although you mightn’t think it, to look at me—and poor Louis Napoleon, and De Morny, and all the lot of them. Gad, sir! the English and the Americans were all over the place; and I was very young then, but I was in the swim of things, I tell you, and a jolly good time I had of it, too.’

‘I should not have thought you were old enough to remember all that—I mean, to have been in the swim of it, as you say,’ Conrad observed, looking with some interest at the man’s youthful face, clean-shaven but for a small moustache.

‘Ah, bless you, yes! I’m in my forty-fifth year, though nobody would take me to be so old, and I began life so early that I sometimes feel as if I must be seventy-five or ninety-five. But what’s the odds so long as a man has a good time of it, eh? So I say, at all events.’

‘Well, it’s a cheerful philosophy,’ Conrad observed, as his new friend was evidently expecting him to say something.

‘Philosophy! Lord bless you! nothing of the kind. Not much philosophy about me. It’s my way, that’s all, and I can’t help it. I tell you, I have had a jolly lot of troubles in my time, and I’m in trouble now, at this very moment.’

‘Sorry to hear it,’ Conrad said. ‘You don’t seem much cast down.’

‘Well, where’s the good of letting on? But I don’t mind telling you, as you are a countryman of mine, and the first Englishman I have spoken to in Paris this time—and I like the looks of you—that I am in trouble. Fact is, I have lost my pal—best friend I ever had.’

‘Dead?’ Conrad asked sympathetically.

‘No, no—not so bad as that, I hope. In fact, he would be rather a difficult fellow to kill off—he’s so well up to everything. But I don’t know what has become of him, and I want to find him, and I’ve been about all sorts of places trying to make out something about him, and I can’t make out any mortal thing, so far.’

‘You have been trying in Paris?’

‘In Paris! Oh no! Lord bless you! he ain’t here

now—I'm sure of that much. No, I have been trying to trace him through New York, and San Francisco, and New Orleans, and Sydney, and—oh, well, such lots of places. I have been almost round the world hunting for him, and everywhere I go I meet people who know him, but no one who knows where he is. None, none, none! "Where is he?" every chap asks me, and I can only say, "It's no use asking me. I came here to ask you, and if you don't know, I don't know."

'Strange, isn't it?' Conrad asked, not, however, feeling any very deep interest in the inquiry.

'Strange! Well, I should think it was—to me, anyhow. I don't seem to be able to get on without him; I don't seem to be myself without him. I miss him more and more every day.'

'You were great friends?'

'Friends! Lord bless you! yes, we were that! And yet it was only because he was such a good sort of a chap that we were friends. What was I? Only the game-keeper's son, and he was one of the family who owned the estate. But they sent me to school with him, and to college with him. He learned everything that came in his way, and I learned just nothing at all, or so little that, when I forgot all about it, it didn't seem to make much difference in my stock of education. But I could do a lot of things that he could do, only he did every blessed thing much better—or better, anyhow—than I could do it. Riding, and shooting, and skating, and yachting, and cricket-playing, and card-playing, and billiards, and starting speculations, and—oh, well, all sorts of things. We could do pretty well anything, only he could do most things better than I. And such a good-looking fellow, too. The pretty girls ran after him, I can tell you.'

‘He must have been a wonderful man,’ Conrad said, smiling to himself at the enthusiasm of his new companion.

There seemed something sincere, too, in the enthusiasm, which touched him in an odd sort of way. He began to wish that he could find himself admiring any human being quite as much as that.

‘He was all that,’ said the admirer decisively.

‘Well, I hope you will soon find your friend,’ Conrad said, and he threw some real sympathy into the tone of his voice.

‘Oh yes; I’m safe to find him somehow or other. Only what puzzles me is why he doesn’t let me know.’

That was a puzzle out of which Conrad could not possibly extricate him. So he rose to say good-night.

‘We shall meet again, I hope?’ the stranger said.

‘I hope so,’ Conrad answered, more or less sincerely.

‘Staying long in Paris?’

‘I don’t quite know. It depends on things.’

‘So does my stay. I have a heap of things on hand. I’m thinking of going to London for a bit. You are staying in this hotel while you do stay, I suppose?’

‘Yes. I am thinking of going back to London, too.’

‘Back to London? Then, of course, you live in London?’

‘Yes, I live in London.’

‘Have you ever noticed,’ the newcomer asked, ‘how every foreigner—everybody not English, I mean—if he hears of an Englishman, at once takes it for granted that he must live in London? Why should an Englishman live in London if he doesn’t want to? They don’t seem to understand much about our county families, do they?’

Conrad was rather amused at the idea.

‘I must say,’ he admitted, ‘that I have noticed that very often.’

‘Noticed it! Why, sir, I have found it everywhere all over the globe. You say to a man in Florida, in Melbourne, in Tokio, in Brisbane, in Madras, in Cape Town—anywhere you like—“I have come from England,” and at once he says, “Oh yes; you live in London.” Why should I live in London? I ask you to tell me that.’

He was growing quite excited in his resentment at the idea of being set down as inevitably a Londoner.

‘You come from Manchester, perhaps, or Liverpool,’ Conrad insinuated, well knowing with what scorn both these great Northern cities look down upon the Metropolis of England.

‘Manchester! Liverpool! No, sir, not I. I come from the ancient soil of England—from the yeomanry of England. I am not ashamed of it, I can tell you—I am proud of it.’

‘Quite right,’ Jem said soothingly, and not altogether without sympathy. ‘As a matter of fact, I am not a Londoner. I have been living in London lately, but I come from one of the counties.’

‘I am very glad to hear it. May I ask your name?’

Conrad pulled out a card-case and handed him a card. It bore the name of ‘James Pierrepoint Conrad, 27, Clarges Street, Piccadilly, and Voyagers’ Club, St. James’s Square, London.’

‘Voyagers’ Club! Yes, I have been there a good many times,’ the stranger said. ‘My old pal is a member of that club. Conrad, eh?’

‘Conrad—yes.’

‘One of the Conrads of Northumberland?’

‘Yes, a very humble member of that large family.’

‘A good North-Country man, like myself. I think I must have known it from the first. Well, look here, let’s dine together. You are not going off to-morrow?’

‘No, not to-morrow, I think.’

‘Then dine with me. I’ll take you to some first-rate place—not that you mayn’t know your way about Paris as well as I do; but, then, good Lord! you are so awfully young! I learned the art of dining in Paris under De Morny and Persigny, and the lot. There’s my card.’

Conrad took the card and read it by the light of one of the electric lamps close to him. It bore the name of ‘Albert Edward Waley, Manhattan Club, New York, and English Club, Constantinople.’

‘I come from Northumberland too,’ Mr. Waley said. ‘Do you know how I got my first names? My people called me Albert Edward after the Prince of Wales. See the reason why?’

‘Well, I suppose loyal feeling——’

‘Loyal feeling—yes, to be sure; but there was more than that.’

‘Oh, there was more than that?’

‘Yes, to be sure. Our name was Waley, and they thought I might as well have the loyal advantage of it. Waley is very like Wales—don’t you see?’

‘Yes, certainly,’ Conrad answered, considerably amused. ‘I think you are quite entitled to all the honour that may come from the resemblance of the two words.’

‘Well, my people thought it, anyhow; and as I was not consulted on the matter at the time, I can’t be fairly accused of trying to bring myself any nearer to royalty than my humble state allows me to do. But never mind about all that—will you come and dine with me to-morrow?’

‘Yes, with pleasure,’ Jim said.

He began to be interested in Mr. Waley, and, indeed, to like him. After the fashion of the would-be literary man, he satisfied his own soul by telling himself that he might make some copy out of his new acquaintance, Mr. Waley.

‘That’s all right,’ Mr. Waley said cheerily—‘that’s all right. You see, we are both from the North-Country. I’ll let you know the time and place to-morrow, and we’ll have a good dinner, I tell you. Are you going into the billiard-room? No? Well, I am fond of a little game of billiards, and I’m not a bad hand at it. Mind you, I would not let you try a game with me if anything heavy was on.’

‘Oh, I can play fairly well,’ Conrad said, rather annoyed.

‘Yes, of course, I know—that sort of thing. You young fellows care more about poetry, I suppose, than about games of billiards. I don’t myself. Grown too old, I fancy. Lost the hang of the poetic business, I dare say. Well, you won’t come?’

‘Thanks, not to-night,’ Conrad answered.

Then the two new acquaintances separated. Mr. Waley went to the billiard-room, and Conrad went to his bedroom and stepped out on his balcony, and looked at the moon, and thought over all manner of poetic or half-poetic things, and, among the rest, of his false true-love, and of the mysterious ring.

CHAPTER V.

MR. WALEY'S CHIEF.

JIM CONRAD dined with his new friend at the appointed time and place. The place was one of the very best restaurants in Paris; the dinner, of course, was excellent. Conrad congratulated Mr. Waley on the success of the meats and the wines.

'Yes, it's good,' Mr. Waley said sententiously; 'almost as good as you could once get at Delmonico's in New York.'

'That's about the best?' Conrad inquired.

'*Was* the very best,' Mr. Waley said, with authority. 'Been knocking about the world a good deal, and I ought to know.'

Jim had not been knocking about the world very much, and had no claim to anything like universal knowledge. So he let the assertion go undisputed, having, indeed, no reason whatever to dispute it. He found his new companion odd, fresh, intelligent, and entertaining. They were now smoking, over their coffee.

'Glad to see you smoke cigars, and not cigarettes,' Waley observed. 'That's what a North-Country man ought to do. I don't like cigarette-smoking. I think it's simply trifling with a serious business.'

'Good enough for women, you think, no doubt?'

'Quite so; yes. Just good enough for women. I don't think much of the women. They are generally in the way, don't you find?'

'They are sometimes sadly in the way,' said poor Jim,

thinking of his own bitter experience, and perhaps inclined to be a little confidential under the influence of the wines and the cigars and the soft evening air.

‘They are always in the way,’ Mr. Waley declared emphatically.

To give further emphasis to his declaration, he smote his hand somewhat heavily on the table with the manner of a man who drives a nail into the coffin of an opponent’s argument.

‘I hope you don’t speak from experience,’ Conrad mildly said.

‘By Jove! yes, I do—in my own person and that of my pal. He made an awful mistake, and so did I. But he began it; I only followed suit with him, as I did with everything he did.’

‘What did he do?’

‘What did he do? What didn’t he do? Why, he just got married.’

‘Well, but such a lot of men do that.’

‘Yes, a lot of men—a lot of the sort of men that you might pick up here and there out of the gutter; but not such men as my pal. By Jove! he did knock himself out of time when he got married.’

‘How was that? But pray do forgive me if I am asking unreasonable questions. I really am not curious about other people’s affairs.’

‘Oh no, you are not a bit unreasonable. You see, I began telling you the story, and it’s only natural that you should like to hear a little more about it. Well, he married, I am told, an awfully nice girl—I never set eyes on her—but, Lord bless you! he could marry any girl he liked. Well, for awhile she just spoiled him.’

‘Spoiled him? How was that?’

'She was very handsome and clever, he told me. And, do you know, he actually fell dead in love with her.'

'But I was under the impression that men generally fell dead in love with girls before they married them.'

'Oh, God bless your heart! nothing of the kind. Nowadays men generally marry for money, don't you think? But this girl hadn't any money to speak of, and so, you see, it was absurd of him to think of marrying her. But he fell in love with her, and he kept on loving her after they were married; and that was how she spoiled him.'

'Still, I don't see how that spoiled him.'

'Well, she set herself to elevate his moral tone and all that, and she drew him away from some of his habits—what she called his bad habits—bad habits, stuff and nonsense! He was making a lot of money at billiards, and at Monte Carlo, and at Epsom, and in the City, too; he had the head of a Rothschild for speculation and finance. He could start a company out of a patent for the renovation of old buttons if he took it into his head; and, by Jove! she succeeded for a while in convincing him that he mustn't do anything of the kind, and that he must go in for what she called an honourable way of living. Honourable way of living! As if a man is not entitled to live by his cleverness! I was sorry for it all. I knew it wouldn't last; I knew it couldn't last. And, of course, it didn't last.'

'No, I suppose not,' Conrad said.

His attention was now beginning to wander somewhat. If you have never known, or even seen, a particular man, it is rather hard to take an interest in his moral or immoral development.

'No, of course not. He soon began to grow tired of it all, and he used to tell me about it. But in the mean-

time, don't you see, I had followed the bad example myself: I went and got married.'

'Oh, you did; and was it a bad example?'

'Why, yes, of course it was. I hadn't any heart in the business; but I didn't seem as if I could get on without my old pal. He was my chief, though, and not my pal; and I felt awfully lonely, and there was a widow woman who I thought rather liked me—and she had a good little pot of money at her disposal—and in sheer despair I asked her to marry me.'

'And she consented?'

'Yes, she consented; but she didn't let me get hold of much of the money, and after a while she got not to like my ways, don't you know. Said I wasn't made for ladies' society—only fancy! As if lots of pretty girls hadn't liked me well enough. And, in fact, we couldn't hit it off at all, and so we agreed to differ—I mean, we agreed to part.'

'You separated?'

'Yes, of course we separated. What was the good of it to me? I used to have ten times more trouble in extracting a fiver out of her than I should have in winning ten times the money at Epsom, or anywhere else you like to name. And she said that I made love to the maids—which was utter nonsense, for she took jolly good care to have them ugly enough to frighten Don Juan into good behaviour. So we separated. Well, absence makes the heart grow fonder, isn't it said in some song? I can't say that I feel it quite in that way. The longer we are separated, the less I want to be back with her again. I dare say it's very wrong of me; but, don't you see, I can't help it, and what a man can't help I don't think ought to be set down to his own fault. Don't you agree with me in that?'

'Well, I am afraid it is rather a serious question for moralists, and I am not quite sure that I should be able to grapple with it.'

'One can't grapple with all these things,' Mr. Waley said contentedly. 'One has only to do the best he can.'

'For himself or for others?' Conrad asked, with a tone of sweet innocence.

'Oh, for himself, of course. One is only put into the world to take care of himself. I am not sent into the world to take care of you—now am I? Come, I put it to yourself.'

'No, of course; I quite admit that,' Conrad answered, with a smile. 'But you seem to think a great deal about your friend.'

'Yes—yes; but he is my friend and my pal and my chief. He is all the same as a piece of myself—twiggy-vous, as the song says in one of the halls in London. That's quite a different thing—quite another pair of shoes, if I may use such a vulgar expression.'

'Yes—yes; I quite see that,' Conrad said. 'But your friend—how did his marriage go off?'

'Just about as badly as my own. I don't know anything for dead certainty, because he was a sort of chap that wouldn't always tell you everything. There was no betting on him sometimes, don't you see. But I rather understood from him that the girl couldn't stand any more of him. Between ourselves, I was not altogether surprised. You see, it's not all women, or even all sorts of women, who can understand and settle down to the goings on of a man like him. Perhaps she didn't quite like the ways in which he made his money—women are so queer about some things. Perhaps she may have thought that he was a little too fond of being admired by handsome women—

even after his marriage. You see, some girls don't ever understand what men are like—men like my pal, I mean—and they can't make allowance. Men are men, you know, and women are women—don't you agree with me in that?"

'Oh yes, I quite agree with you in that,' Conrad replied, with a very becoming gravity.

'Thought you would. Well, anyhow, he's gone.'

'Gone?'

'Yes, gone, and without letting me know a word. That's the trouble of it. I don't know where to get hold of him. I have been to see a man to-day who knew him—a man here in Paris. He was mixed up with him in some affairs, but, of course, he doesn't know anything about him now. How could he, if I don't?'

'What sort of a man?' Conrad asked, by way of showing that he kept up an interest in the whole question, as Mr. Waley seemed to expect, rather than out of any motive of direct personal curiosity.

'Well, he isn't a man you could make much account of by his position in life, or his occupation, or his personal appearance, but he is a man who is up to some things, too. Tell you what he is: he is just a hair-cutter's assistant in the English and American hair-cutting shop—you know, there in the Rue de la Paix. Just you go there and get your hair cut by him, and draw him out, if you can. He can tell you a lot of things about everybody, if he will only talk—just mention my name, if you like—but the trouble is to get him to talk.'

'Wonderful man!' Conrad exclaimed. 'A hair-cutter who will not talk! I never before heard of the like.'

Mr. Waley stopped and considered.

'I don't know,' he said, in a depressed tone of voice. 'I knew a woman who could remain absolutely silent for

two whole days running, and not even answer a question, when she wanted to annoy her husband.'

'Yes, but that is a different case,' Conrad replied.

'Different in a manner—yes; but what a woman can do for a purpose, why shouldn't a hairdresser do with no purpose at all?'

'The question is unanswerable,' Conrad willingly conceded.

After a while, the coffee and the cigars and the talk came to a natural end. Mr. Waley invited Conrad to go with him to some entertainments with which he proposed to wind up, or rather, perhaps, to begin, the business of the evening. Conrad, however, refused to share in any further festivities for that night. He was not in the humour for entertainments. He went home to the Grand Hotel, and sat in the courtyard, and smoked.

He had become curiously interested in Mr. Waley. The man puzzled him—the man with apparently the many pursuits, both in business and pleasure, and the one devotion. Clearly Mr. Waley's devotion to his 'pal,' as he usually called him—'his chief,' as he preferred in more thoughtful moments to call him—was as that of the spaniel to his master. Yet there did not seem much of the spaniel's nature about Mr. Waley. He appeared to Conrad to have all the temperament of the fearless and conscienceless adventurer. Conrad 'sized him up,' to use Mr. Waley's adopted American phrase, as the sort of man who, if born some centuries before, would have been a daring chief of Free Lances, or a privateer in the interest, first of himself, and next of Elizabeth's England. He might perhaps have made a name for himself in history, Conrad thought, and now where would his temperament and his destiny conduct him? He had evidently not much scruple as to the par-

ticular rights or wrongs of a purpose or a policy, and his only conscience, so far as Jim had any opportunity of observing, had shrunk into his absolute devotion to his friend.

What could the friend be like? Was he the sort of commanding figure that the fancy of his adoring follower painted him? Or was the adoring follower simply a victim of the delusion common to most adorers? Anyhow, the question had some interest for Conrad, and took him for the moment out of himself. He wondered if he should ever meet the object of so much adoration, and what he should think of him if he did meet him, and whether there could really be any man who had not forced his way into history, and who yet could have deserved the kind of all-encompassing homage which Waley bestowed upon his idol. For nothing said by Waley had suggested that his chief was a famous person, the mere mention of whose name would carry with it universal applause.

One man in Paris, at all events, knew something about him besides Mr. Waley—the English assistant in the hair-dresser's shop. Jim made up his mind that he would very soon get his hair cut, and endeavour to rouse the silent Briton into talk.

CHAPTER VI.

CLELIA VINE.

CONRAD put off his return to London, he did not perhaps quite know why. Possibly the principal reason was that the Morefields interested him, and he was, all unconsciously, anxious to be interested in something as well as his ill-gifted ring. They did not, however, appear at the *table*

d'hôte any more. They had evidently arranged their sitting-room to their satisfaction, and they preferred to dine in their own apartment. He missed them, and was almost sorry he had not kept to his original purpose and left for London. But he received a civil little note, asking him to have luncheon with them the next day, and to dine with them and some English friends on the day but one after. Then he changed his mind, and was glad he had not gone back to London.

Gertrude Morefield interested and amused him. She did not seem a lovable creature, he thought—lovable, that is, in the young man's sense—and in any case, of course, he said to himself, he could never care for any woman again. But he was amused and piqued by her absurd little theories about life, and he admired her devotion to her mother.

The devotion had to be divined. It was not made manifest in any patent way. The girl seemed to have few opinions in common with her mother. She sometimes even spoke to her mother in a tone that was at least half snubbing.

She did not seem to Jim to be altogether a good-tempered girl; but she was evidently devoted to her mother, and was willing to pass the greater part of her life in foreign health-resorts, because she thought it might do her mother good. Of course, Jim knew very well that there were numbers of English girls who would do just the same thing for the same purpose. But he was not quite certain whether there were so many good English girls who would do quite the same thing without trying to make some little capital out of it in the way of a reputation for self-sacrifice.

On the day after the luncheon-party, Conrad took the

two women to see some picture-galleries and other sights. He was amused with the comments of Gertrude on some of the pictures. She found the same fault with them for the most part that she found with fiction.

‘Where is truth?’ she asked with asperity, as they stood before a famous picture in the Luxembourg. ‘There are no women with such perfect figures as that,’ she proclaimed dogmatically, and almost angrily.

‘No?’ Conrad asked gently. ‘But, even so, is not that only another reason for giving us a glimpse of the ideal?’

‘Give me the truth,’ she said inexorably.

‘Is ugliness truth?’

‘I don’t care. If it is, give it to us, and let us know from the first what we have to put up with.’

‘Then, do you think we are all ugly?’

‘Oh yes—most of us.’

‘Gertrude, my love!’ her mother gently interjected.

‘No, pray, Mrs. Morefield, let us have this out. Am I ugly?’

‘Well, I think all men are more or less ugly; but, then, ugliness does not matter in a man.’

‘I certainly don’t think you are ugly. But I don’t mean to enlarge on that particular illustration——’

‘No, don’t,’ she said, with puckered eyebrows, and looking, Conrad thought, amazingly and cruelly pretty.

‘But don’t you think any woman beautiful?’

‘Oh yes; her face, perhaps, or her eyes, or her figure; but there isn’t any perfection, and the painters and the sculptors have no right to try to take us in.’

‘I see. So when you form your republic, the painters and sculptors will be kept out of it, along with the novelists, and the poets, and the patriots?’

‘Yes, certainly, unless they learn to paint and chisel on the right principles.’

‘Quite so. And the right principles—what are they?’

‘My principles, of course,’ the young lady said composedly.

‘Nothing could be settled better,’ Conrad replied, with humorous deference. She appeared to him to be perfectly serious.

He was greatly amused, and not ill pleased, when Gertrude, on their parting for the day, gave him a very friendly pressure of the hand, and told him that when he found the hotel at all dull, she and her mother would be glad if he would pay them a visit at their rooms in the evening. He found the hotel very dull, and he paid them a visit in their rooms.

Then the evening came for the dinner-party. He, poor youth! not yet recovered from a hopeless disappointment which was to blight his whole life, dressed himself, nevertheless, with exceeding care. He was amazingly particular about his shirt-front, his neck-tie, his silk socks, his shoes, and all the rest of his gear. Man’s broken heart not uncommonly prefers to be covered by a very white, smooth, and stiff shirt-front. Yet it is certain that Conrad did not recognise in himself the faintest suggestion of any sentimental feeling towards Miss Morefield. But he was lonely, and she was pretty and very peculiar and interesting, and she was a young woman and he was a young man; and she had made Paris become suddenly interesting to him, who had no longer any interest in anything.

Nothing could be better arranged than the little dinner-party in Mrs. Morefield’s rooms. The dining-room was small, but it was daintily fitted up, and looked, with its flowers and its fronds, like a dining-room in some graceful

home, and not at all like a dining-room in a big hotel. The table was round, and brought the guests pleasantly together.

In the drawing-room Jim had been presented to the lady he was to take in to dinner. She was a handsome and tall young Englishwoman—the company were all English, apparently—Lady Diana Congreve, the wife of the Hon. Henry Congreve, a handsome young soldier, who was the younger son of the Earl of Wychfield. Lady Diana was undoubtedly younger than Jim, but by virtue of her being a married woman, even though but lately married, she gave herself airs, and in a moment impressed him with the conviction that she considered herself infinitely more aged and authoritative than he could possibly be. He was a little late in arriving. He had been on his usual pilgrimage to the Bois de Boulogne, and he had hardly time to see anyone except his hostess and her daughter, and Lady Diana, and he conducted her from the drawing-room at the front of the floor to the dining-room at the back.

‘Do you know the people here?’ she asked as she went along beside him.

‘I don’t think so—at least, I haven’t had time to see anybody, except you, and, of course, the Morefields.’

‘So, of the company generally, you have only seen me?’

‘Yes; and I don’t know that I want to see anybody else.’

‘Oh, come, that is very crude as a compliment. In my time boys were not allowed to pay compliments. Now, where are we, I wonder? My sight is short; I can’t read the names on these cards.’

‘I can read them——’

‘You can read already! Precocious boy!’

Conrad had hardly seated himself at the dinner-table, when, happening to glance all unconsciously down his right-hand side, he became aware of the photographed girl turned back into an original. Yes, that was the original of the photograph—about that there could be no mistake. She was dressed very quietly in a black silk evening gown, which set off the whiteness of her shoulders and her arms. But what Conrad noticed especially was the exquisite moulding of her pale face and the brightness of her deep, dark blue eyes. To him just then they looked under the lamp-light almost black—that is, as far as eyes ever can be really black. Afterwards he came to know that they were only a very deep gray, backgrounded with blue.

Something made the girl look up and look in his direction, and their eyes met for a moment.

‘I should like to have that woman for a friend,’ Jim Conrad thought, with a sudden thrill at his heart.

He pulled himself together, and rattled away in talk with his dinner-table partner; but he did not always quite know what she was saying to him, or what he was saying to her. Still, they managed to get on somehow, and he could flatter himself that he had contrived to occupy her attention fairly well, all things considered.

‘Can you tell me who that girl is on the other side of the table?’ Lady Diana suddenly asked, ‘there’—and she nodded her chin—‘the pale girl in black, I mean.’

‘Yes; I think I know who she is, for I was shown a photograph of her. Mrs. Morefield showed it to me the other day. She is a friend of the Morefields—I don’t know anything more about her than that. I don’t know her name.’

‘Don’t you think she is a very remarkable-looking girl?’

‘Very ; indeed, I think she is very handsome.’

‘Handsome ! Well, no, I would not say handsome, but remarkable—decidedly remarkable. She seems to me the sort of woman who must have a story behind her. Don’t you think so ?’

‘Oh yes, I certainly think so,’ Jim said abstractedly.

‘Evidently you are not much taken with her—you discuss her in that casual sort of way. Now, if I were a man, I think I should be greatly taken with her.’

‘Indeed !’ Jim said, not knowing in the least what he was saying. ‘I wonder why you should think so ?’

‘Think what ? Think that you are not taken with her, or that I should be if I were a man ?’

‘I beg your pardon,’ poor Jim said vaguely.

‘I do believe you have not been listening to a single word I was saying. Now I withdraw all my former opinions, and I am coming fast to the conclusion that the girl in black has bewitched you.’

‘But I never saw her before, and I have never spoken to her.’

‘Well,’ Lady Diana said complacently, ‘if I know anything of young men, you will see her to-night in the drawing-room, and you will speak to her, and you will remember the night because of her. Well, look here, will you come to me after you have talked to her and tell me what you think of her ?’

‘I dare say she is a very commonplace sort of woman.’

Jim endeavoured to be very cool and indifferent.

‘You don’t think it a bit,’ said Lady Diana.

The English fashion of the dinner-table was not followed. The ladies and gentlemen had coffee together and cigarettes—for those who would smoke them. Lady Diana enjoyed a cigarette, and cared not who knew it.

‘Hal and I smoke and drink together,’ she said, nodding at her handsome husband.

‘But you can’t join me with a cigar,’ Hal said, ‘and you are not equal to a brandy-and-soda.’

‘If men may smoke, women may smoke,’ Gertrude asserted.

‘Certainly,’ Mr. Congreve admitted; ‘and if men drink a whisky-and-seltzer, a woman has a right to drink two—I don’t mean to drink also—I mean, to drink two whiskies and two seltzers, or, perhaps, two whiskies and one seltzer.’

‘You don’t take woman seriously,’ Gertrude said sternly.

‘He doesn’t take me seriously,’ Lady Diana said with a smile.

‘You don’t take yourself seriously, dear.’

‘Why should I? I can get more fun out of life by not taking anything seriously—even myself.’

The girl whose photograph Jim had seen took no part in the general conversation. She talked in a low tone with Mrs. Morefield, and occasionally vouchsafed a remark to the man who had taken her in to dinner, whom Jim afterwards discovered to be a fashionable London physician who had obtained recent renown by the promulgation of the doctrine that all disease came from the use of salt, and could be cured by a liberal imbibing of hot water in which iron nails had been soaked.

The company at last wandered off to the drawing-room. There Conrad promptly forsook Lady Diana, although when she seated herself on a sofa she made a motion with her skirts as if to afford a space for him. He at once made for Miss Morefield.

‘I have recognised the original of the photograph,’ he whispered; he had grown wonderfully confidential with her of late,

‘Of course you have. Well, isn’t she striking? Don’t you think her very handsome?’

‘Really I do, and I know you are not the sort of girl who wants to hear her pretty friends disparaged.’

‘Oh no, indeed; I want to hear my friends praised. But you must not call her pretty—I can’t have that.’

‘No, she is much more than pretty; she is quite different from anything pretty. I can imagine people thinking her not beautiful, because she is too much out of the common pattern—the pattern of the commonplace handsome English women whom Nature reels off by the dozen.’

‘You must not speak contemptuously of any women,’ Miss Morefield said, with puckering eyebrows. ‘And it ought not to matter whether a woman is handsome or ugly——’

‘Oh, but it does, though,’ Jim fervently interjected.

‘An ugly woman has her place in the scheme of the universe as well as a pretty one.’

‘I suppose so; but I don’t work the scheme of the universe, and so the ugly women don’t concern me.’

‘I am very glad you don’t work the scheme of the universe, for you would certainly work it very badly, and after the fashion of a very silly young man. You must be awfully young.’

‘Older than you, anyhow.’

‘But a woman is always much older than a man in proportion to years, and it makes me feel that you are so ridiculously young when you talk as if there was nothing in the world to be thought of but a woman’s pretty face. It makes me angry to hear men prate like that.’

‘But you yourself called my attention to the face of your friend, and you were angry when I carelessly spoke of

it as pretty, because you did not think the word was half good enough.'

'What has that got to do with the question? I say that she is handsome, and I want to have justice done to her; but I do not love her merely because she is handsome. Never mind, we won't argue about her, or about woman's beauty, and whether it ought to be the only thing thought of when we are making our estimate of woman's place in life. Don't you want to be introduced to my friend, Miss Vine—Clelia Vine?'

'Of course I do. What a pretty classical name—Clelia! I am most anxious to make her acquaintance.'

'Acquaintance! I don't think she is a girl who cares much about multiplying acquaintances. If she does not soon take to you as a friend, she will contrive to let you know.'

'And then,' Conrad asked in affected dismay, 'what shall I do?'

'Fall back on me,' Miss Morefield promptly answered, with a saucy, kindly smile.

'Ah! then I am all right, happen what will,' Conrad said; and the good-humoured little lady brought him up and presented him to her friend.

Some man was talking to Miss Vine, but he politely gave way when Conrad was brought up by the daughter of the hostess, and Jim settled himself down in the chair beside the girl with the deep, dark eyes. She gave him a sweet and gracious welcome, frank, unconcerned, almost commonplace in its frankness. Jim had expected something more in the style of the Tragic Muse.

'I am very glad to meet you, Mr. Conrad. I have heard a great deal about you to-day from Mrs. Morefield and from Gertrude. Gertrude Morefield is my dearest friend.'

‘Yes, and I have heard about you, and I have studied your photograph, and I recognised you the moment I saw you at the dinner-table.’

‘The photograph is a very good likeness,’ the girl quietly said. ‘It was done specially for Gertrude. I am very fond of her, although we don’t always quite agree in our views of things.’

‘What are your views of things?’

‘Oh, well, perhaps it is there that the difference comes in. I can’t say that I have any particular views of things, and she has, and she thinks that all women ought to have. I haven’t read as much as she has, and I don’t know enough to form any opinions worth the forming, and I am afraid she thinks me a little egotistical.’

‘Egotistical? That certainly was not the opinion of you which she expressed to me.’

‘Oh no, I dare say not. I know she thinks very highly of me, and she certainly would not give me away to a stranger; and, indeed, all her geese are swans, as I have often told her. But just because she likes me she thinks I ought to take a deeper interest in human affairs.’

‘She is an enthusiast about human affairs,’ Conrad said.

‘She is—but it is curious—she is a downright enthusiast about her mother and her friends, and she can discuss the problems of life with the composure of an ancient philosopher. She puzzles me sometimes, but I love her always. I do hope she will be happy.’

‘Why should she not be? Some man will make her happy.’

Miss Vine smiled.

‘I’m sure Gertrude would say, if she heard you, “How like a man to say that!”’

‘To say what?’

‘To say that some man will make her happy.’

‘But surely a man is ordained, one might say, to make a woman happy?’

‘A man is ordained, perhaps, to make a woman unhappy.’

She spoke those words with a sudden expression of earnestness and of conviction. Then, as if she felt she had been showing too much of earnestness and conviction, she at once relapsed into her ordinary tone of voice.

‘You have not known Gertrude Morefield long?’

‘No; only met her and her mother quite lately. But we have some close friends in common. I like them very much—the mother and daughter.’

‘In my mind,’ she said, ‘their existence raises the average of humanity. I only hope that child will be happy.’

‘Well, she professes that she will be able to keep free from one of the great troubles of humanity.’

‘What is that?’

‘Oh, come, now: falling in love, of course.’

‘Has she been telling that to you?’

‘Yes—as a matter of casual talk, not as any matter of confidence.’

‘What did she tell you?’

‘She told me that she never had been in love.’

‘Oh, that!’ and the girl made an impatient movement with her shoulders.

‘Yes, that; but she also said that she never meant to fall in love. Of course, I know that lots of girls say that.’

‘She isn’t like lots of girls, and I am sure she meant it when she said it. But I know well that there is a loving heart under all that philosophic exterior, and I am afraid about her, and I want her to be very happy.’

‘And you think she can’t be if she falls in love?’

‘Oh no ; I did not say that. But she is a girl likely to be disappointed if she does not meet with the right man. You know that her mother is in very delicate health?’

‘Yes, I know that.’

‘She only keeps alive by going about to warm climates in the winter, and I don’t think she knows how much danger she is in. But Gertrude knows it. One of her troubles is to keep in perpetually good spirits, so that her mother may not think that she is alarmed. Of course, if anything were to happen to her mother, and the right man had not come——’

She stopped.

‘Well, then?’

‘Then I suppose Gertrude and I would give up civilization together, and start off in companionship for some wilderness.’

‘Come, I hope that won’t happen.’

‘I think it would please me well. Not the death of my dear friend Mrs. Morefield—Heaven forbid!—but to go away from civilization with Gertrude, and live our own lives, and not think about the world any more. But I suppose it would not suit her,’ she added, with a half-suppressed sigh. ‘That is another reason why I wish she could find that right man and fall in love with him, or at least let him fall in love with her.’

‘I am sure such a life would not suit you in the least,’ Jim said earnestly.

‘You do not know me—you know nothing about me.’

‘I hope to know you,’ he said gently. ‘I hope you will allow me to know you.’

‘Oh yes, surely! Any friend of the Morefields is already, by right of friendship, a friend of mine. You know I am staying with them, and shall be travelling with them. You

will see me if you come to see them, and of course you will do that.'

'Yes, of course I shall do that.'

The company was evidently on the break-up. One or two guests had already gone. Jim felt a strong anxiety to get a touch of his new friend's hand before leaving. His proper course was doubtless to say good-night to his hostess first, and then to her daughter, and then to get out of the room with a general, all-round bow. But he felt that he could never get back to Miss Vine once he had taken farewell of the Morefield women, and he was rendered desperate. He must touch her hand.

'Good-night,' he said, and he held out his hand.

She put hers into it, but she gave him not the faintest pressure—simply laid her hand in his and allowed him to clasp it. It felt cold to his touch. He was sorry he had taken any pains to get at this parting salutation. Then he found his hostess.

'Don't go just yet,' she said. 'You see, we are under the same roof—you are at home. Stay a little and talk to us.'

Jim delightedly stayed.

The outer guests, if we may call them so, took their leave. Lady Diana asked Jim to come and see her in Biarritz, if he went that way in the season, and Jim promised that he certainly would call at her villa if he went that way, knowing full well that he had not the slightest intention of going that way.

'Now,' said Miss Morefield, when the outer world had departed, 'let us draw our chairs together and talk.'

'What shall we talk about?' Jim asked tentatively.

'Let us talk about life,' Miss Morefield promptly answered.

‘But what is life?’ Jim asked, trying to throw himself into the spirit of Miss Morefield’s investigation.

‘That’s just what I want to find out,’ Miss Morefield answered.

‘I think I know enough about life,’ Mrs. Morefield said with a smile. ‘I think I am content with my experiences, and only ask that I may not have any worse. To me, life is resignation.’

‘To me, life is hope,’ said Miss Morefield.

‘Doesn’t somebody say,’ Miss Vine struck in, ‘that the one lesson of life is renunciation—“Thou shalt renounce”? It is Goethe, isn’t it?’

‘It is Goethe,’ Jim answered. ‘But we must not take it that way—we must not take it as his own view of things. He puts the sentiment into the mouth of his world-wearied Faust.’

‘The feeling has always appealed to me,’ she said.

‘But, surely, at your time of life, you cannot be unhappy?’ Jim said bluntly.

‘I am living,’ she replied.

‘Come, this talk is getting too gloomy,’ Mrs. Morefield said. ‘We ought to have some ghost-stories to enliven us.’

Conrad wished very much that the young lady who had made this cheerless answer was an outside guest as well as the others. But he wished this only because she would then have had to go away, and would have left him alone with the mother and daughter, and he could have asked them all about her and about her story, and why she seemed so depressed, and why her views of life were those of the world-wearied Faust before he started on his new tour of youth and emotion and of experience to be drawn from every source and every age. But the girl was stay-

ing with the Morefields in their rooms, and he had to go away without learning anything of her history.

‘You stay in Paris—how long?’ he asked of Mrs. Morefield, as he was taking his leave.

‘In Paris—how long, Gertrude? How long do we stay in Paris?’

‘Well, mamma, until it is time for us to go somewhere else—where we shall still find something like summer.’

‘We have to follow the sun, Mr. Conrad,’ Mrs. Morefield said with a saddened smile.

‘Happy you who can follow him!’ Conrad replied. ‘I have to go back to London for the winter, and we shan’t get much sun there.’

‘I hate London,’ Miss Vine declared.

‘Oh, come, you are an unpatriotic young Englishwoman,’ Mrs. Morefield protested.

‘Mamma,’ Gertrude interposed, ‘you know what I think of the abominable heresy of patriotism. Why should not Clelia like France better than England, and Paris better than London, if she feels so inclined?’

‘But I am afraid I hate Paris, too,’ Clelia said in a low tone.

‘Have you just come from London?’ Conrad asked.

‘Yes, she has just come from London,’ Mrs. Morefield answered for her.

Miss Vine did not answer for herself. Conrad thought he saw a glance pass between the two girls.

‘Is this your first day in Paris?’ he asked, hardly knowing why he put such a question.

‘My first day in Paris? Oh no! I have spent years in Paris.’

‘No—I meant your first day in Paris this time.’

'She came yesterday,' Mrs. Morefield said, again answering for her.

The young girl still made no answer for herself, and Jim fancied that he again saw a line of light flash from the eyes of one girl to the eyes of the other.

'May I call to-morrow?' he asked of Mrs. Morefield.

'Not may, but must,' Gertrude Morefield answered, with her winsome smile.

Jim went to his room feeling less disconsolate than he had felt most times of late. The dark-eyed girl was a puzzle to him, and he thought of her much as he sat, later on, in the courtyard and smoked.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. MARMADUKE COFFIN.

THE days went and went, and Jim did not leave Paris. He began to feel as if he should never care to leave Paris—so long as the existing conditions endured. Yet his life was in a certain sense monotonous. He spent all his spare time with the Morefields, and consequently with Clelia Vine. Perhaps it would be putting it better to say that he spent with them all the time that they could spare to him. They were enjoying Paris until the weather should begin to get a little too cold for Mrs. Morefield, and while there was yet a chance of a fairly warm journey to whatever place they had settled to winter in. As yet they put off any definite plans on that subject. When the time came, they could always settle quickly, Mrs. Morefield said. So they lingered, and Jim Conrad lingered, too.

He was greatly interested in Miss Vine's curious way of life. She was an English girl born and brought up on the Continent. Her father was an Englishman, but he had spent the greater part of his working lifetime as a physician for English and American patients along the shores of the Riviera in winter and spring, and while the summer heat kept foreign visitors away he betook himself to attending English and American patients at inland baths in France—Royat and such-like. His wife died young—he died comparatively young—and Mrs. Morefield, who had been a patient, and a grateful patient, of his, took charge for a while of his only child. Clelia was thoroughly English in ways and feelings, but she had only once been in England until she had grown up, and that was for a fortnight's holiday in London, which she enjoyed intensely. It was curiously interesting to Jim to talk with this English girl who had been so little in England, and who now for some reason hated London.

He was always made welcome in the rooms of the Morefields. He became their escort to all sorts of places. Gertrude leaned to practical science; Clelia decidedly cared and understood more about art; Mrs. Morefield liked everything that anybody else liked, provided she cared for the anybody else. Jim began to feel warm and cheered and happy again. He was on the way to forget his fickle sweetheart, and he was on the way to forget the mystery of the ring. He had never spoken of the ring to the Morefields or to Miss Vine. He felt that it was a secret confided by fate to him alone, and that he must not breathe it out to anyone else. He did not feel sure that Gertrude Morefield would take much interest in it. He thought her the sort of girl who has more concern in promoting the happiness of the general than in sympathizing

with the distresses of the individual. She would no doubt have thought the woman who threw away the ring a very feeble-minded and pitiable creature. Suppose her lover had proved unworthy of her—what then? Why should she lament? If she had proved unworthy of him, then indeed she might regret and repent and sorrow. But, in any case, was there not the great heart of humanity throbbing and bleeding all around her? and how could she conscientiously find time to give herself serious trouble about some ridiculous lover who had proved himself as inconstant and as treacherous as men generally do under all conditions?

We do not say this was the reasoning of Gertrude Morefield, or that it would have been if she had known anything concerning the mystery of the ring. But this was the way in which Jim reasoned that she would reason if he were to try to interest her in the subject, and so he did not make any effort to interest her in it. So we thus reason about each other's reasoning every day in our lives.

But Miss Vine! If he could have been tempted into telling his ring-story to anyone, he would have been tempted into telling it to her. For hers seemed to him a nature simply overflowing with sympathy. Out of her eyes came such looks of expressive kindness. Every story of distress seemed at once to go straight to her heart. Still, Jim did not feel free somehow to tell that story, and in any case he could only have told it to Clelia if he and she were alone; and he hardly ever saw her alone, except for a chance moment or two when there was not time for the beginning of any story-telling. The result of all this was that the question of the ring began to occupy less and less of Jim's attention. Now, when he woke at night he thought of Clelia, and not of the ring. Her coming had

banished the ring from his thoughts. She was to him a far more interesting problem. There was a strange sort of maturity about her. She was a very young woman—twenty-two, perhaps, certainly not more; she was actually a little younger than Gertrude Morefield, so Mrs. Morefield and Gertrude had told him, and yet there was a certain tone of command and a suggestion of experience about her.

The more Jim Conrad saw of Miss Vine, the more he came to delight in her society. He went to the rooms of the Morefields every day, and he began to put off indefinitely his return to London. For some reason which was not made plain to him, the Morefields postponed their choice of a winter residence. The real reason, in all probability, was just that which they professed—that they wanted to have all the fine weather they could in Paris before starting off anywhere else. So Jim thought he might as well linger long enough to see them fairly off the premises. He was for the moment careless about his future. He was in the worst position in which a young man can be placed; he had just enough to live on, and not enough to prosper on. A greater incentive to idleness cannot be devised for the condition of an ordinary mortal. So he stayed and he stayed.

It became more and more clear to him that Miss Vine was offering him every inducement to stay. From her he received the most cordial welcome. Sometimes he almost fancied that Mrs. Morefield and Gertrude were a little cold to him. Sometimes Mrs. Morefield, with an air of motherly sympathy, asked him why he was wasting so much of his time in Paris. Sometimes Gertrude said she supposed they must soon make up their minds to lose him. But Miss Vine never said anything of the kind. She

always urged him to come again to-morrow. Our poor youth began to be fairly bewildered. He might have told himself, if he were to judge from externals only, that Clelia was falling in love with him. But he was a modest young man, not wholly without experience, and somehow he could not think that; at all events, he did not admit that to his mind. She seemed, he thought, all too frank and friendly; and yet there were moments when he caught her eye, and might almost have been prevailed upon to think that there was a secret understanding between them, and that they stood apart from all the world.

It began to be a curious position. Every day he was more and more drawn to Miss Vine. Every day she became more and more openly friendly with him. Every day she more and more urged him to remain in Paris, and every day Mrs. Morefield gently remonstrated with him for wasting so much of his time, and Gertrude told him frankly that she wondered how one could be a man and not have something more definite to do in the world. All the time he could not see that the Morefields were any the less friendly to him than they had been before. He could not doubt their friendship; their faces—as Dr. Johnson said of the Thrales—were never turned to him but in kindness; and yet they must have seen that he was drawn more and more towards Clelia Vine.

‘What is,’ he asked himself, ‘the mystery of Clelia Vine?’

Once he ventured to ask Mrs. Morefield, when she and he happened to be alone, whether there was not a sad story behind Miss Vine.

Mrs. Morefield answered hurriedly:

‘Yes, I believe there is. I have no doubt there is; but I don’t know what it is, and I have not asked. My

daughter knows, but she is an unimpeachable friend, and she would not tell anyone. I dare say she would tell me if I asked her; but I have never asked her, and you need not ask her, for she would never tell you.'

'Oh, I should never think of asking her.'

'No, it would be of no use. She has the most extreme and romantic notions of the obligations of friendship.'

'Can anyone have too extreme notions about that?'

'No, I suppose not—I am sure not,' Mrs. Morefield answered quietly.

Apparently a little less of the extreme in life would have satisfied her. Perhaps her daughter was a little too intense for her.

'One thing,' she said, brightening up, 'you may count upon—nothing in Clelia Vine's story will tend to Clelia Vine's discredit.'

'Oh, of course, I knew that,' Jim exclaimed emphatically.

'How did you know it?'

'Because I know her.'

'But you don't know her very well?'

'I have eyes, and I can see,' he replied.

'Yes,' she said, in a subdued kind of tone, almost as with a suppressed sigh; 'you have eyes and you can see—*her*. At all events, you are quite right in the conclusion you have come to. Gertrude adores Clelia, and whatever the story is, she knows the whole of it.'

'And you have never asked her?'

'Never; why should I? I have the most implicit trust in Gertrude, even in her judgment.'

'But she is so young.'

'She does not think that young women ought to be treated like children, and she is a great believer in friendship.'

‘Oh yes, of course,’ Conrad said, somewhat dejectedly.

He was not very fond, perhaps, of theories about life, and just then Miss Gertrude herself came into the room, and the story of Clelia Vine, and the theories of woman’s friendship to woman, and man’s right to interfere, and the independence of daughters, and the reserved authority of mothers, were put aside for the time.

Conrad left the Grand Hotel in the early afternoon, and sauntered listlessly, melancholy, slow, along the streets, not troubling himself to think much of whither he was going ; puzzled a good deal about this new human interest which seemed to be growing strangely, inexplicably, up in his heart. Suddenly he found himself in the Rue de la Paix, and all at once he remembered the talk of his acquaintance, Mr. Albert Edward Waley, and the recommendation to go and see the English hair-cutter in the English and American hair-cutting saloon. He had noticed the place often in passing along the street, but he had never entered it. He pulled up now in his walk, and thought that that would be a very good time to have his hair and beard touched up a bit.

Neither hair nor beard much needed touching up. Jim was a tidy sort of man, and took good care to keep himself always well groomed ; but, still, it was an opportunity. So he went in. It was an ordinary Paris hair-cutting room, large and well arranged. There were several assistants hanging about, not many of them occupied in active duties. It was a slack time of the afternoon. If it were not, Conrad would not have cared to go in. He only wanted, like poor King Lear, to discourse with his philosopher ; and philosophic discourse on any expected subject would hardly have been compatible for him with a crowd of listeners. So he felt a sort of anticipatory sense of

success or good luck when he saw that the chairs were many and the occupants few.

‘Monsieur?’ one of the attendants asked, with courteously inquiring gesture, and all the appearance of a bland willingness to gratify every wish of the customer.

‘I want someone who knows English well,’ Conrad answered, with the bluffest British air.

Conrad spoke French very well indeed for an Englishman, but for the moment it suited him better to suppress his accomplishments in that way.

‘Pardon, monsieur, we all speak a little English here. We do attend on the English and the American gentlemen—and the American gentlemen, they do not always speak the French.’

‘But I want an Englishman to whom I can explain things,’ Conrad insisted.

His little game rather interested him. He was a successful amateur actor, as has already been said.

‘We have an Englishman here, monsieur, if monsieur only condescends to put himself to the pain of taking a chair for a few minutes. The Englishman will be at the service of monsieur almost at once.’

So Conrad put himself to the pain of taking a chair, and he waited for the English hairdresser. Meanwhile, he studied the room and its occupants, to see if he could not find out his fellow-countryman.

Oh yes, he knew him in a moment, and he knew him chiefly through his silence. There were a few hair-cutters and hairdressers working away at their patients, if we may so call them, and they were all chattering cheerily in French, or in English as she is spoken—all but one, and that man was absolutely silent.

Jim devoted the few moments he had of interval to a

study of the man's face and manner. He had the firm jaw of an Englishman—even, Jim would have said, of a North-Country Englishman. Otherwise there was not much English-looking about him. He had a bald forehead, and the thin hair that arrayed itself about his ears was dark almost to blackness. He had a heavy moustache, and a thick beard clipped square. He had long, heavy eyelids which usually hid his eyes, just as a curtain might have done. But when the curtain was raised the dark eyes flashed keenly enough. Conrad could see, and Conrad thought he detected in them now and then a sudden upward glance, such as a hunted animal might show if he were expecting a pursuer from this side or that. The man appeared to be well on in the forties; was rather under the middle size, but very strongly and squarely built.

Conrad was disposed to pride himself, to himself, on his new-born and growing power of observation. As a novelist in embryo, he was pleased to tell himself that he could read the hearts of people, although an occasional twinge of the critical conscience reminded him sharply that perhaps he was only reading them all wrong. Still, he felt great interest in watching this particular man. The man still worked on in grim and stony silence. The chattering Frenchmen plied their craft as if they loved it. The solemn Briton seemed more like an executioner preparing for his dismal work, and naturally reluctant to distract from penitent thoughts the minds of his foredoomed victims, than like one engaged in ministering to the comfort and the grace of his fellow-creatures. Conrad had happened on a time of day when it was not likely that many men would be inclined to settle down and have their hair cut or their beards shorn, and therefore he soon found

himself with very few companions in the place, and was quickly under the hands of the English operator.

‘Monsieur?’ the man asked in what you might call good thick British-French accent.

‘You are English,’ Conrad said; ‘speak to me in your own language. I am English—can’t you see?’

Conrad adopted this blunt style with a purpose. The man who has made a reputation for silence is not likely to be shaken out of his habitual self by long words or eloquence.

‘What do you want done?’ the sombre hairdresser asked politely, but curtly.

‘Hair and beard trimmed; not too much. Don’t want to be turned into a different man. Want to remain as I am, only better. See?’

‘I see.’

‘Go ahead, then.’

The man was evidently a little puzzled, but he was not easily put out. So he went at once to his work. There was silence for a moment.

‘Look here,’ Conrad said suddenly. ‘Been long in Paris?’

‘Twenty years—there or thereabouts.’

‘Like it?’

‘Hate it.’

‘Where do you come from?’

‘London last.’

‘Why didn’t you stay there?’

‘Hate London.’

‘Worse than Paris?’

‘Much worse.’

‘What place do you like?’

‘No place that ever I was in.’

‘What’s the matter? Climate?’

‘No; don’t trouble my head about climate.’

‘No? Then what do you trouble your head about?’

‘Many things.’

Conrad thought he had pursued that sort of personal inquiry far enough, and that he had better give the silent man some friendly hint that might make him a little more confident. So he suddenly changed his subject.

‘Ever met a man named Waley?’

‘What Waley?’

‘Well, he gave me his card—Albert Edward Waley.’

‘Yes, I know him. North-Country man?’

‘Yes; so am I.’

‘Thought so; so am I. Yes, I know Mr. Waley. He’s a good sort. He would stand by a man if the man was in trouble.’

‘I thought so.’

‘Know him well?’

‘Oh no; met him only two or three times; liked him. He is staying at the Grand Hotel.’

‘I know.’

‘So am I. He advised me to come and see you.’

‘What do you want to see me for?’

‘Don’t know.’

‘Why did you come?’

‘Because he told me.’

‘What did he say I could do for you?’

‘Tell me things.’

‘What things?’

‘Didn’t say. Anything I wanted to know.’

‘What do you want to know?’

‘Don’t think I want to know anything in particular.’

‘Then, why did you come?’

‘Because he told me.’

The hair-cutting and trimming work being done at that moment, Jim got up from his chair, was duly brushed down, put on his coat, and was preparing to go his way. He considered that his best policy, if he wanted this habitually silent man to talk, was to say as little as possible himself, and not to show the slightest desire for special information. Moreover, he had only come to study the characteristics of a silent hairdresser with a view to the remote possibility of finding some hint for a figure in a novel. So for the day he could not do anything more.

‘Good-afternoon,’ Conrad said. ‘Like to talk to you some other time.’

‘Call on you at the Grand some night—may I?’ the hairdresser asked.

‘Delighted! We’ll have a smoke. When?’

‘To-morrow night, eleven; we are late here.’

‘To-morrow night, eleven. My card—see?’

‘Thanks; my name is Coffin.’

‘Coffin?’

‘Yes—why not?’

‘Isn’t a cheerful name,’ Jim said bluntly, still acting his self-assumed part.

‘Not much about me is cheerful. Marmaduke Coffin.’

‘All right, we defy augury! See you to-morrow night, Coffin.’

And so they parted.

Jim was infinitely amused by his day’s adventure. The name of Marmaduke Coffin completed his delight. It was utterly impossible that a taciturn English hair-cutter, in a Paris shop, who bore the name of Marmaduke Coffin, should not have some food for romance somewhere stowed

away in his life. Then all the conditions under which he had sought acquaintance with Marmaduke Coffin seemed auspicious for his purpose.

Who on earth was Albert Edward Waley? Who could his people be who had such an odd idea of making him like the Prince of Wales by tacking on Albert Edward to Waley—for that and no other purpose? And why did it happen that Albert Edward Waley should have fallen in his, Jim Conrad's, way, and taken to a liking for him? Why should Albert Edward Waley have spontaneously, and with no obvious purpose, advised him to go and make acquaintance with Marmaduke Coffin? And who was the lost and all-accomplished 'pal' or chief? Who were this Mystic Three?

Jim delightedly told himself that he had come on a very gold-mine of romance. If a story did not blossom out of all that, then he could not see where a story could come from, for a raw beginner. Could he work the ring in by any artistic process? Well, no, he thought not. The story of the ring, according to his present feelings, was not for the public. But Jim began to think that he bore a charmed life in the matter of romance—that he had a sort of divining-rod for literary copy. Only that with the divining-rod one knows exactly what he is seeking for. Jim did not know.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOMEONE HAS BLUNDERED.

JIM knocked at the door of the Morefields' sitting-room soon after luncheon the following day. He was longing to tell them all about his new acquaintance, Marmaduke

Coffin. He liked to tell them—and they evidently liked to hear—any scrap of news or of experience out of the common. The three women loved to be amused in that way, and it delighted Jim to amuse them. Especially charmed was he when he could make Miss Vine's pale face light up with a smile. Her smile was a transformation—it really illumined her eyes, and changed for the moment her whole expression. He felt sure he could make her smile if he gave her some idea of the humours of Marnaduke Coffin.

His first knock remained unanswered. He could hear the tones of a piano and of an accompanying voice, or, to put it more correctly, of a voice and an accompanying piano. He knew it was Clelia's voice, and he would not disturb her song. The voice sounded low and divinely sweet, and perhaps he might have said divinely sad as well. She was singing to the Morefields, he thought. He would come back a little later. But the song ceased, and he knocked again—a very gentle tap. He wanted it to convey the idea that he would not harshly interrupt for all the world. Jim was positively becoming quite faint-hearted. A voice—the same voice—invited him to come in, and he went in, and saw that Miss Vine was seated at the piano, with her back turned to him. She did not turn round at once. She probably fancied that the knock came from one of the hotel attendants. Jim stood for a second or two studying her shapely figure as she sat.

'I beg pardon for disturbing you,' he began, in rather an awkward sort of way. He felt sure that he was awkward.

Miss Vine turned round and greeted him with eyes that were undoubtedly lit up by the genuine spirit of welcome. Jim could not fail to see that.

‘Mr. Conrad! I am so glad you have come.’

‘I didn’t know you were alone,’ Jim said apologetically.

‘Doesn’t matter, does it?’ she asked. ‘We were expecting you; but Mrs. Morefield and Gertrude had to go out for a short time, and they delegated me to entertain you in their absence—which I am very glad to do, to the very best of my power, at all events.’

‘I hope I don’t interrupt your singing?’

‘Oh no; I was only crooning something to myself to pass the time. I am not much of a singer——’

‘But you have a very sweet voice——’

‘There isn’t much range in it, and I am really not musical in the better sense at all. Won’t you sit down? The Morefields won’t be long.’

Conrad was very fond of the Morefields, but at the moment he did not feel particularly anxious that they should hurry home. He began to find his heart beating. He took a seat, and was about to give Miss Vine some account of Marmaduke Coffin. But in an instant he changed his mind, and resolved that Marmaduke would keep very well until the Morefields came in.

‘What are you doing to-day?’ he asked.

‘I don’t know until Mrs. Morefield comes back; you do not want to go back to London just yet?’ she asked, in a kindly and a winning tone.

There was a look of friendly interest in her eyes which touched the heart of the young man, and almost, as it seemed to him, melted it. Certainly it melted away any lingering resolve to return to London.

‘I suppose I ought to go back,’ he said doubtfully. ‘But I don’t know that I feel any strong personal inclination to return. I—I would much rather be here—be with you—all!’

He hastily put in the little word 'all,' because he feared otherwise the expression of his wish to be 'with you' might sound premature and be disconcerting.

'Then why should you go back? Why not stay with us as long as we remain in Paris? Why not come with us to Algiers, or wherever we make up our minds to go?—if we ever do make up our minds. If you decide to go with us, then you shall have a voice in settling where to go, which, I can tell you, we three women find it pretty hard to decide for ourselves.'

'You see,' he began hesitatingly, 'I ought to be doing some work in life. I have only a very small fortune. It is enough for me just now; but—well, I don't know how to put it—it wouldn't be enough for one's future life, don't you see?'

He was very awkward and much confused. She was neither awkward nor confused. She took his words with a gratified smile.

'Of course, I understand,' she said. 'You don't fancy I am a baby?'

And her look and her manner had all that easy and assured superiority which young married women naturally assume even when they are actually younger than the particular young man they are talking to. The look and the manner had often puzzled Conrad and set him thinking. Miss Vine was distinctly and unmistakably younger than he, and he could not understand why she should assume this appearance of greater experience in life.

'Well, if you know——'

'Why, of course I know. You mean that you have not money enough to get married on.'

'Yes,' he answered, very much confused; 'I do mean that.'

‘Would that really matter much in your case?’

If Conrad was puzzled before, he was positively bewildered now. Would it matter much in his case? Why, the Morefields had both told him that Miss Vine was poor.

‘Why shouldn’t it matter much in my case?’ he asked awkwardly.

‘Have you so poor an opinion of women? Do you think that women care for nothing but money?’

‘No; I never said or thought anything of the kind.’

‘Why’—she was breaking out into emotion—‘if I loved a man, I should not care one straw if he hadn’t a farthing in the world!’

‘Ah, yes; but a poor man might hesitate to bring a girl whom he loved into that most trying of all lives—a life of genteel poverty. I can understand a pair of loving gipsies; but genteel poverty in London!’

She looked at him impatiently.

‘I don’t see where the genteel poverty comes in in this case.’

She shrugged her shoulders in her sensitive, impatient way.

‘I see it only too well,’ he said dejectedly. Then the proud thought came up to his mind: ‘If this brave girl cares for me, and believes in me, and is willing to trust her fortunes to me, why should I refuse to make myself happy? Why should I not take her and work for her, and try to make her happy?’ Full of this thought, he caught her hand in his hands. She seemed a little surprised, but was not in the least discomposed, and allowed it to remain in his keeping for a moment.

‘Do you want me to help you?’ she asked gently.

To help him! The words and the tone bewildered him.

‘You can do more than help me,’ he stammered, feeling once again on very insecure ground.

‘I cannot do more than help you,’ she said, and she stood embarrassed now; ‘but I will help you all I can.’

‘Surely,’ he pleaded, ‘you can do more than just give me a helping hand?’

He could not believe, even in that moment of wild hopefulness, that she really meant to express her willingness to help him out with his desire to ask her to marry him.

‘What else could I do?’ she asked blandly.

‘It is for you to decide?’ he said.

‘For me to decide—me!’

‘For whom else, in Heaven’s name?’

‘Oh! I am afraid we don’t quite understand each other,’ she said, in some confusion; and she rose from her chair.

‘I am so sorry!’

‘Surely we can make it quite clear,’ Jim said eagerly, for he felt that he was about to be dismissed, and that his audience was coming disastrously to an end.

‘Yes, yes, of course we can; it was my fault altogether. I shall see it all clearly some other time, soon—but not just now. I am very impulsive; I don’t always give myself time to think over things. It was a fault of mine since I was a child. Good-bye for the present.’

‘But I shall see you again?’ unhappy Jim asked forlornly.

‘Yes—oh yes,’ she answered, with an embarrassed manner; and then she added more decisively: ‘Yes, Mr. Conrad, I should be very glad to see you soon again. I am afraid I have been making some sort of mistake. It is no matter, perhaps, but we had better have it out, I think.’

‘When can you let me see you?’ the perplexed and disconsolate Jim asked. He hardly knew where he was now.

‘I don’t know. Not to-day. The Morefields are just coming in, and they will expect you to take them somewhere. Have you any place in your mind?’

‘Oh, there are lots of places.’

‘That’s all right. They will want to see something new.’

‘Are you not coming?’

‘I? No, I can’t go to-day. I have to write a lot of letters; and, anyhow, I have done my duty—at least, I haven’t done my duty, for I was told off to entertain you until they came back, and I am afraid I have not much entertained you.’

‘When will you see me?’ Jim asked.

‘When? I don’t know, but I will send for you—perhaps to-morrow, if you will come.’

‘I shall come,’ Jim said gloomily, as if he were invited to come up for sentence. In fact, he had a kind of vaguely pervading idea that he was to be invited to come up for sentence.

Then the Morefields came in, and Gertrude greeted Jim with so sweet and kind a look, and such a sympathetic pressure of the hand, that he fancied she must surely know what his hopes had been, and what was to come of them, and she must have pitied him in her sisterly and compassionate little heart. He looked into her eyes with a sense of tender gratefulness, and she dropped her eyelids under his glance, and a colour came into her cheeks. ‘She has the true soul of sympathy, that girl,’ Jim thought.

Then they talked about what they were going to do, and Jim suggested all sorts of places to see, and at last

they agreed upon their arrangements. And then it was discovered, for the first time by the Morefields, that Miss Vine could not go with them. Mrs. Morefield and Gertrude were sorry. Jim was probably a good deal more sorry, although he knew that, even if Clelia had consented to accompany them, he should not have had the slightest chance of any real talk with her, and this no doubt helped to reconcile him to her remaining at home. For he was sure that he would have found it all too tantalizing to be with Clelia and not to have an opportunity of asking her what had gone wrong between them. He was so fond of the Morefields that he wanted to give himself up altogether to the task of amusing them, and making the day pleasant for them, and he knew that under the conditions he was not capable of doing this if Miss Vine were to be one of the company.

This is the way of enamoured youth. It would often rather be without the loved object altogether than not have the loved object all to itself. Under present conditions, with the loved object present, Jim could not possibly attend to the Morefields. With the loved object out of sight, he could at all events make himself agreeable, and help a little to render life pleasant for people whom he loved to please.

So he took the Morefields to see all sorts of places which had associations worth treasuring, and he thought Miss Morefield more than ever kind and sweet, and he was touched by many a grateful glance of her eyes, and he hoped that she might soon meet someone who could love her and appreciate her, and make her 'spirits all of comfort,' as someone in Shakespeare puts it. So Jim had, on the whole, a quietly happy day; but he excused himself from dining with the mother and daughter. He felt under

a sort of obligation to remain away until Clelia had called him up for judgment and passed sentence.

Some readers may, perhaps, have come already to the conclusion that Jim Conrad was a very fickle young man, who did not know his own mind—a very light-o'-love, in fact. He had just been lamenting the loss of one sweetheart. Why, it may be asked by censorious observers, should he already be seeking for another? Perhaps, to begin with, there is no condition in which the heart—of man, at least—so yearningly stretches out its tendrils to find a new love as that into which it feels itself plunged when it has been cruelly shaken out of the old love. But the truth is that when Jim fell in with his so-called first-love, he was in that time of life and that form of temperament when a young man must fall in love with some woman or perish in the attempt. He was in love with being in love. He was in love with his beautiful betrayer—he thought her beautiful; others, no doubt, did not—just as Romeo was in love with Rosaline. Romeo was in love with Rosaline because the time had come when he must begin to be in love with some woman. Rosaline came in his way, and he found her, and fancied that he fell in love with her. But was his love for Juliet the less sincere because he really loved her after having fancied that he loved another? Did he not die for Juliet—and what could he have done more to prove his love? He certainly did not die for Rosaline. Why should anyone not allow to Jim Conrad that which we all allow to Romeo? Jim was certainly not anything like so picturesque a figure as Romeo—but he has his equal rights as a man and a brother.

Jim dined somewhere, and looked in at a theatre, and felt dismal, and 'eagerly he wished the morrow,' like the unhappy young man in 'The Raven.' He dragged himself

home forlornly to the Grand Hotel, and he sat in the courtyard and called for cognac and a syphon, and set himself to smoke. Presently he heard a cheery voice ringing in his ears, and, behold! he saw Mr. Albert Edward Waley before him.

‘Hello!’ Mr. Waley exclaimed. ‘I am so glad to see you. May I sit down here and join you in a smoke and a drink?’

‘Why, certainly,’ Jim said. ‘I am delighted to see you.’

And really he was, for he was glad to be roused out of his melancholy and his uncertainty, and the gladsome voice of Mr. Waley sounded quite musically to his somewhat lonely sense.

‘Well, look here, I have some good news to tell you,’ Mr. Waley exclaimed. ‘Here, garçon—du cognac, s’il vous plait. Thanks, old man’—this was to Jim—‘don’t trouble yourself; I have a cigar.’

‘Well, what is your good news?’

‘Of course, it don’t greatly concern you, but I take you to be a good-natured sort of chap, and you will be glad to hear it.’

‘I am sure I shall, if it pleases you,’ Jim brought out feebly.

He was still thinking of Clelia Vine.

‘It’s this: I have heard from my pal—my chief, I mean—you know.’

‘Not really?’

Jim was not quite absorbed in interest.

‘Yes, but I have, though. And do you know where he is just now, of all places in the world?’

‘Sorry to say I have not the slightest idea. In Paris?’

‘In Paris? Not a bit of it! But fancy, I have been hunting him half over the world, and he writes me from London!’

‘How lucky for you he is so near!’

‘Yes, it is lucky for me, and I shall go over to-morrow. He is full of good spirits, and has quite a new thing on, which he says is the best thing he ever tumbled into.’

‘Some sort of a speculation?’

‘Speculation, bless you! Well, yes, I suppose some people would call it a speculation. But somehow, to my mind, it seems rather too big a thing for that sort of name. I say, old man, I wish we could bring you into it. Can’t you be prevailed upon to stand in?’

‘I am afraid I haven’t any head for finance,’ Jim mumbled languidly.

He was not without interest in his companion, but he knew he could not form any sensible opinion as to the scheme. Besides, he was thinking of his next interview with Miss Vine, and what might possibly come of it.

‘Finance? Oh, bless you! this is something rather bigger than mere finance. I say, didn’t you tell me you were a book-writing sort of chap?’

‘I told you I had a great ambition to write books—works of fiction—novels, you know,’ Jim put in modestly.

‘Well, well! yes, to be sure! See there now! You have an ambition to write novels! Well, and why not?’

‘Well, why not?’ Jim rejoined, now rather amused.

‘As I say, why not? But look here: you might make a first-class A1 copper-fastened sort of novel out of many a thing we could put you up to—take my word for it.’

Mr. Waley’s eyes were sparkling with excitement, and he poured out more cognac and drenched it—but did not drench it quite too lavishly—from the syphon.

Some of the pulses of Jim’s romantic nature were stirred by the suggestion of this possible opening of a new vein

of romance for him. The instinct of the embryo novelist thrilled him into a new and lively interest. He was thinking, too, that to-morrow might be a fatal day in the story of his love-affair. He felt very much in the mood of the immemorial lover who says to his own soul overnight that if she will not have him to-morrow he will take the Queen's shilling before the evening.

'What is your enterprise, may I ask?' he said, with an air of becoming languor and personal unconcern; for, look you, he was not going to give himself away and acknowledge himself a person who was quite ready to join in any manner of undertaking.

'Well, it looks like a pretty big thing this time. We have been in a lot of adventures and enterprises together, and some of them turned out successes, and some of them turned out very considerable failures, I can tell you. I am not a chap that minds a failure now and again, I may say. I'd much rather have a big, exciting failure than a dull little twopenny-halfpenny success. Now, if I size you up properly—and I think I do in a general sort of way know my man when I see him—I should say that you were a chap of just the same humour. It takes a good deal to frighten you, I'll be bound?'

'Well, I don't think I am more easily frightened than my neighbours,' Jim replied modestly.

The compliment—for it was evidently meant to be accepted as a compliment—pleased him all the same. He was still a very young man.

'No, I shouldn't fancy you were. Well, I'll tell you something about it. But I say—look here—there's another man I must see—man I told you of, in fact—hairdresser, Rue de la Paix—you know. Have you seen him?'

'Marmaduke Coffin? Oh yes, I have seen him, and,'

Jim said, suddenly remembering the fact, 'he is coming here to have a smoke at eleven this very night.'

Jim, to tell the truth, had been forgetting the appointment.

'Don't mean to say so! I am glad! That's very lucky, for I shouldn't be quite certain of how to get hold of him to-night. Did he positively say he would come at eleven?'

'He did, positively.'

'Then, he's sure to be here punctual as the needle to the pole, or grandfather's clock, or anything else you like. It's now twenty-five minutes to eleven. We shan't have long to wait.'

'You are going over to-morrow?'

'Like a shot. I'd go over to-night if I could; but that can't be worked, and I should like to see old Coffin anyhow.'

'Does Coffin go over too?'

'Over to London?'

'To London—yes.'

'Oh no! Lord bless you, no! Coffin never goes anywhere. He always stays here. He don't like London. Besides, he has his work to do here.'

'His work?'

'Why, yes; didn't you see him?' And Mr. Waley broke into a merry laugh. 'Why, hair-cutting, of course. What else could it be?'

Jim saw that there was some immense joke concealed under the words, but he could not pretend to make it out.

'Well, I suppose hair-cutting is his business,' Jim said rather sulkily.

In life few things are more irritating to the nervous

temperament than to be kept outside a joke—to have a little joke going on ‘apart,’ and not to be allowed to share its humours. Jim fancied himself to be at least as clever as most people in seeing a joke.

Mr. Waley indulged himself in a fresh burst of laughter.

‘Why, of course hairdressing is his business. I used to hear at school that there was a difference between vocation and avocation—one was the regular thing, don’t you know, and the other was a sort of interlude. Let me see, now—let me pull myself together. How was it? Yes, of course—vocation was the regular business, and anything else was the avocation. I give you my word, I am not quite certain which is Coffin’s vocation and which is his avocation.’

Jim did not think he was bound to care much either way, and he certainly had no intention of expressing any curiosity on the subject. So he smoked his cigar and sipped his brandy-and-water in silence for a time. Mr. Waley did not remain silent. He kept talking on about anything that came uppermost to his mind, and did not seem to notice whether Jim was listening to him or not. Jim, for his part, was beginning to get a little bit weary of the companionship. But he was not going to lose his chance of a sensation story just yet.

CHAPTER IX.

MR. WALEY AS RECRUITING-SERGEANT.

JIM looked up at the clock in the courtyard and saw that it was just eleven. Mr. Waley’s eyes followed Jim’s glance. Mr. Waley in another second gave Jim a nudge with his elbow.

‘See,’ Mr. Waley murmured, ‘here comes our man—just up to time: he always is.’

And Jim saw Marmaduke Coffin entering the courtyard. Coffin was dressed neatly, wore a light overcoat, looked quite a gentlemanly sort of man. He was dressed in English fashion rather than in French.

‘Hello!’ Mr. Waley called to him; ‘come this way.’

Coffin had been glancing round the courtyard to look for his friends, or, rather, for his host. He seemed a little surprised on seeing Mr. Waley with Jim. But his surprise found no expression in words, and after one glance not more expression in looks.

‘Glad to see you, Mr. Coffin,’ Jim said.

Unconsciously Jim seemed to have made up his mind that ‘Mr.’ Coffin was demanded by the neat dress and the tall hat.

‘Not kept you late, I hope?’ Mr. Coffin asked, with a quite jaunty sort of air. ‘Mr. Waley, I am so glad to see you.’

‘Have a drink, Coffin?’ said Jim, forgetting for the moment the tall hat and the neat get-up.

‘Thank you, Mr. Conrad; some brandy, please, and the syphon; and a cigar, if you don’t mind.’

These delicacies were all forthcoming. Then Waley began what might be considered serious talk.

‘Look here, Coffin,’ he said, ‘I am going to London to-morrow morning by the first train.’

‘Thought you would,’ said Coffin.

‘How the devil did you know?’ Waley asked, with an emphasis that somewhat astonished Jim Conrad.

‘Didn’t know. Didn’t say I knew. Said I thought so.’

‘Why did you think so?’

‘How can a man know why he thinks anything? Come, now!’

‘I think he has you there,’ Jim said, not wanting to be mixed up in any manner of disputation, and rather anxious to be rid as soon as possible of both these English worthies. ‘How can anybody know why he thinks anything? I am sure I don’t know half my time.’

‘No, that’s right enough,’ Mr. Waley answered, somewhat more blandly. ‘But I fancied, Coffin, that you had some reason for what you said.’

‘No reason at all, Mr. Waley. I seldom wait for reasons.’

‘Well, anyhow, I am going over to-morrow to London.’

‘Yes; well, what to do there?’

‘To meet the chief.’

‘Quite so.’

Mr. Coffin’s face expressed no manner of emotion.

‘Yes; he is in London.’

‘Gentlemen,’ Jim blandly interposed, ‘I am afraid I am rather in the way. I am sure you want to talk over some business affairs, about which, of course, I know nothing. Now, if you don’t mind, I shall just go to my room and scratch off a letter or two, and then we can all three settle down to a quiet smoke.’

Jim was in truth beginning to be a little puzzled about his companions, and the kind of work they might be having in hand. The days of the highway robber were clearly over, and the mysterious community described in Paul de Kock’s ‘Moustache,’ who thrived on making unlicensed spirits, would hardly now take much for their money, and coining would not be a safe and paying speculation, and financial swindles were not generally managed by an inner circle of three, one being a hairdresser; and, in short, Jim

could make nothing of it. All the same, he still thought it decidedly interesting, and was not anxious to lose more of it than he becomingly could.

‘Don’t you go, Mr. Conrad,’ Waley said impressively. ‘Don’t you think of going unless you really want to. We ain’t talking any treason here, we ain’t making any plans against the rule of Queen Victoria, God bless her! and here’s her jolly good health;’ and he tossed off another glass of cognac-and-water. ‘Nor yet, I give you my word against the Republican Government of France, which now kindly protects us here, and receives us as its guests—at our own expense, of course. Good Lord! I remember the rattling days of the Second Empire. What a time we had then! And I told you, Mr. Conrad, I was in the swim of it.’

‘Yes, you told me,’ said Conrad. ‘It must have been awfully interesting.’

‘It was, I tell you.’

‘But I am sure I am keeping you from your business talk all the same,’ Jim said blandly, ‘and so I shall leave you together—shall I say for half an hour? There will be time enough after.’

‘Now, look here, Mr. Conrad,’ Waley said, ‘I shall speak right out with you. I want everything on the square. The first time I set eyes on you, here in this hotel, I took a liking to you. Here, in this very courtyard where we are now sitting, and Coffin with us—I mean Coffin with us now, of course; he wasn’t with us then—that first time.’

Mr. Coffin solemnly bent his head in admission of the fact of an absence which he regretted.

‘When I saw you that first time, I said in my own mind, “Now, that’s a real man, an Englishman—blood,

bone, and breeding." Then, when I heard that you were one of the Conrads of the North-Country—why, man alive, I know all about them! I was brought up, I may say, in the very shadow of their ancestral halls, and my chief knows all about them too. And I know a lot about you, Mr. Conrad; and I know that you are a little down on your luck, as a man might say. I mean that you ain't likely to succeed to a great big fortune.'

'Mr. Waley,' Conrad interrupted somewhat sternly, 'I have not met you here to-night to discuss my private affairs. I can't help your knowing about me what everybody can learn who takes the trouble to inquire; but I don't mean to discuss my family history or my personal condition with any stranger, however well-intentioned he may be.'

Jim rose to his feet.

'No offence, Mr. Conrad—no offence,' the imperturbable Waley pleaded. 'I didn't mean any harm. I give you my sacred word of honour. You see, my people were only a sort of adherents or vassals, so to speak, of the Northumbrian Conrads in old days, and I talk with the perhaps privileged freedom of the old retainer. Sit down again, and let us have it quietly out.'

Jim had his weaknesses. One of them was an intense pride in his old Northumbrian family. Mr. Waley had touched that chord of weakness when he ascribed his rash talk to the privileged freedom of an old retainer. So Jim sat down again. Jim never liked being out of temper. Some men delight in it. It annoyed him.

'Well, Mr. Waley,' he asked, 'what do you want to say to me?'

'It's just this: I think you are a sort of lad who ought to be put in the way of making your fortune, and I dare say the chief could put you in that way just now.'

‘I should be very glad indeed to make a fortune,’ Jim said; ‘few people could want it more. But I should first like to know how the fortune was to be made, and who the men are with whom I am to make it.’

‘Right you are!’ Mr. Waley exclaimed. ‘Just the very answer I should have expected from a Northumbrian Conrad. Well, I can’t tell you to-night what’s up, for I don’t know until I see the chief.’

‘But you must know what your line of enterprise generally is?’

‘Oh yes; I can tell you all about that.’

‘What is it? banks, railways, ship-canal, evening newspapers, theatres, music-halls—that sort of thing?’

‘Mr. Conrad, we have souls above that sort of thing. We are—bend down your ear, please; there may be all sorts of listeners at these little tables here—we are explorers.’

‘Explorers?’ Jim asked in amazement, and now at last beginning to doubt the sanity of his companion. Mr. Coffin sat with an aspect of undisturbed and impenetrable gloom.

‘Explorers, yes, that’s it,’ Mr. Waley said, nodding ever so many times, and beaming over with the kindest smiles, as if he had now put everyone at his ease and disclosed a welcome secret.

‘Stanley, Emin Pasha, Burton, that sort of thing?’ Conrad asked in perplexity. ‘I don’t see great fortunes in that.’

‘Oh no, I don’t mean that. We don’t care twopence about the sources of the Nile any more than we care for watching the transit of Venus. We find out new soil where money is to be made, oil here, wheat there, ivory somewhere else, gold, copper, anything you please—oyster-beds even—

and we get up an international wrangle about it, don't you know, and then we try to make the best bargain we can for our rights. But we always give Old England the best chance; don't make any mistake about that. Yes, we do. But if we have found out a thing, we have a right to be paid for our find. Only fair that, ain't it?"

'But I haven't heard much of your operations,' observed the bewildered Conrad.

'We only make the beginnings, don't you see, and we don't care to obtrude our own names on the public. Other people are only too glad to get all the credit when they have bought us out. The real competitors are the Americans and the Germans, and lately the French. But the Americans are the most eager of all, I can tell you, and they are not by any means bad hands at a bargain.'

'Does Mr. Coffin do much exploring?' Jim asked, with a wondering glance at that silent and melancholy person.

'Well, he explores in his own way, and in his own field, but he don't waste his health and strength much in tropical climates. There's a lot of information to be picked up among the English and the Americans who come here to Paris in the season—or out of the season, I should say—out of the Paris season. Mr. Coffin, I tell you, got a good deal of his education, as I did, under the Second Empire.'

'But I thought you told me you had been in Paris only about twenty years?' Jim asked, turning to Coffin.

'Only twenty years for good—or evil,' Mr. Coffin grimly observed; 'but I was in Paris off and on before that time, and I served the Second Empire a good deal in London.'

'In what capacity, may I ask?'

'In the capacity of observer, among the French refugee population in London—Leicester Square quarter, mostly.'

‘Observer? Is not that rather a fine and a long word for it?’

Mr. Coffin looked up, looked down, thought for a moment, and said, with a curious twinkle in his eye:

‘Spy, you mean?’

‘Yes, I did mean something like that.’

‘Wrong,’ Mr. Coffin calmly said.

‘Quite wrong,’ Mr. Waley triumphantly declared. ‘Britons, sir, never, never, never can be slaves—or spies.’

‘All the same, I don’t quite understand,’ Jim put in. ‘Did you make any reports to the Prefect of Police, here in Paris?’

‘Not one,’ Coffin answered, wholly unperturbed.

‘But you must have communicated the results of your observation—let us call it—to somebody in Paris.’

Mr. Waley smiled a benignant smile.

‘Why, certainly,’ he interjected, in a suddenly assumed American accent.

‘Yes,’ Coffin answered, without showing in his voice the slightest trace of any manner of embarrassment. ‘I reported to the chief.’

‘To Mr. Waley’s chief?’

‘To Mr. Waley’s chief.’

‘Who was certainly not the Prefect of Police?’

‘Certainly not.’

‘You may bet your bonnet-strings on that,’ Mr. Waley interposed blandly.

‘Well, gentlemen,’ Jim said—he was beginning to be impatient—‘I have not the least idea what or whom you are talking about, or what the exploring business is that you are concerned in, or who the chief is, or who anybody is, or who either of you two may happen to be; and I don’t see how I could possibly help you in your exploring

expeditions, seeing that I am not an explorer—at least, I have never been so far in my life.’

‘Half a moment, Mr. Conrad,’ Waley interposed, placing his right thumb halfway up the first joint of his right forefinger, as if to indicate the exact division of time to be allotted to him. ‘Half a moment, Mr. Conrad, sir! We don’t want to press you into any service for which you might feel yourself disinclined from the first. But I think we could find you good work to do, and make good use of you.’

‘I don’t want to be made use of,’ Conrad interposed, somewhat in a sharpened tone.

‘Half a moment, Mr. Conrad, sir’—and the right forefinger repeated the same gesture with the right thumb—‘half a moment. Will you just wait a bit, until I have seen the chief and am in a position to tell you what we are going to be asked to do? I don’t know myself just yet—not the least in the world. I have only heard from the chief that he has got some good, strong thing in hand, and until I see him and talk with him I shan’t know any more. You are not staying long here, I suppose? May I call to see you in London?’

‘You have my address,’ Conrad said, rather sullenly.

‘Yes, I have your address, but you might not care to see me, all the same. You have worked yourself, I can see, into a wrong notion about our enterprises, and I want you to get the right ideas. Fancy my letting a Conrad of Northumberland into anything unworthy of his family and their fame!’

Waley stood up, and there was a certain moisture in his eyes, and there was a tremble in his voice.

Conrad was in many ways a tender-hearted youth, and was inclined to believe in the sincerity of people, and

once again the allusion to the Conrad family touched him.

‘Come to see me whenever you like,’ he said hurriedly. ‘I don’t know how soon I shall be in London, but my return can’t be many days off. Come and see me, by all means; and now let us have our smoke out, and talk of something else. Mr. Coffin can tell us something about life in Paris.’

‘I know nothing about what is called life in Paris,’ Mr. Coffin solemnly remarked. ‘I never go in for amusing myself.’

‘Oh, by Jove! I do,’ Mr. Waley declared emphatically.

When Jim went to his room that night, he found that a little note had been left for him. It only said:

‘I shall be alone at two to-morrow, and shall be glad to see you.

‘CLELIA VINE.’

CHAPTER X.

‘I COULD HAVE LOVED YOU, BUT——’

CONRAD thought but little next day of his mysterious companions of the previous night, and of their enterprise and their explorings and their chief, and all the rest of it. He did not quite like to dismiss them as two lunatics—and he was disposed to think that, lunatics or not, they were honest good fellows. But they did not occupy his mind overmuch. They did not occupy his mind, for instance, as Miss Vine did.

He was rather glad to know that Waley had left Paris, and could not come in his way again for the moment.

He had not the least idea of visiting soon the hairdresser's shop in the Rue de la Paix. He lounged about the Boulevards and the Champs Élysées idly and unrestingly; he did not, according to his wont, go to the Bois de Boulogne—and at last it became nearly time to call on Miss Vine.

He found her as he had expected—as she had told him—alone.

‘Perhaps I ought not to have asked you to come to see me,’ she said, ‘but I so often act on mere impulse—and my impulse drove me that way.’

‘I am very glad you did send for me, Miss Vine——’

‘Yes; we got into some misunderstanding yesterday—at least, I did—and I should like to have things made clear.’

‘And I, too,’ Jim uttered fervently.

‘Yes, I am glad that we are of one mood—so far, at all events. I know that by sending for you I lay myself open to misunderstanding—but you will not misunderstand. I think we must have a very frank and outspoken talk just now. I think I am sorry—but——’

‘You may take it for granted,’ Jim said passionately, ‘that I shall not misunderstand anything you say or anything you do——’

‘Yes, I am sure of that. That is why I venture to talk to you in a way that I suppose most women would think a shocking way——’

‘Talk to me in any way you will, I shall know that you mean it only to be kind to me—for my good.’

‘I mean it only for your happiness—and mine——’

‘And yours? Yours?’

‘Yes, indeed, mine—for it would make me unhappy to see you unhappy.’

‘You have it in your power to make me happy——’

‘Ah, yes,’ she said, a faint flush covering for a moment her usually pale face; ‘that is just what I fancied—what I feared! I must speak out now: you will not think I am urged by any motive of idle self-conceit, but I would much—oh, ever so much!—rather you thought me self-conceited than coquettish or cold or hard-hearted.’

‘I couldn’t think you anything of the kind,’ he protested.

But his heart was sinking, for he could guess well enough what sort of answer was to come. He could guess the answer, but not the wherefore.

‘I fancied yesterday,’ she said—‘and you must tell me honestly and courageously if I was mistaken in my fancy—oh! I shall be so glad if I was mistaken in it——’

‘You were not mistaken in it,’ he interposed doggedly.

‘Oh, but you haven’t heard what I was going to say——’

‘I know what you were going to say, and I shall spare you the pain of saying it. You were not mistaken—you were never less mistaken in your life than when you came to think that I was in love with you! That is what you were going to say, is it not? I have at least saved you that much pain—the pain of putting it into words.’

‘You have saved me the pain,’ she said. ‘It was kind of you—it was like you. Will you do something even more kind and generous still? Will you say you can spare me the pain of telling you anything more? Will you say you know the rest?’

‘No,’ he answered passionately, and looking straight into her eyes, which drooped before his as before too strong a light, ‘I will not do that. I must hear all you have to tell me. I will not give up until I know not merely what your answer is, but why and wherefore.’

‘The why and wherefore I am sure you will not insist on having when I have told you what you compel me to say. I cannot marry you, Mr. Conrad. There! is it not a shame of me? You have never asked me to marry you, and I suppose everybody in the world would say I had got but the just punishment for my self-conceit and forwardness if you were to reply quietly that you never had any idea of asking me.’

‘But you know I had every idea of asking you. You saw the words trembling on my lips many a time. I saw by the very manner in which you turned your eyes away that you saw it. Well, you will not marry me. Is that your positive and your final answer?’

‘It is my positive and final answer.’

‘And now will you tell me why? Do you not care about me? Or, look here, is it not possible that you might come to care about me?’

‘Oh yes, indeed,’ she answered quietly; ‘very possible and very likely that I might come to care about you, if I let my feelings take that way.’

‘Then, you do care about me!’ he exclaimed, almost triumphantly.

‘Yes, I do, very much indeed. I admire you; I have faith in you; I find you a delightful companion. I am sure I know you, and I believe you are a man to make a woman happy. But I cannot marry you, and I cannot love you.’

‘Cannot love me—or will not?’

‘Must not,’ she answered in a sweet, low tone. ‘If it is of any comfort to you to know that I could have loved you if we had met under different conditions—if we had met earlier, perhaps—only then it might have been too early.’ She spoke these words as one following some

track of thought wholly her own, and which his mind could not tread. 'Yes, under happier conditions I could have loved you, I should have loved you.'

Even the purest love of man to woman is so blended with self-love that poor Jim found some consolation at that moment for her absolute refusal by her confession that she could have loved him; for he could interpret that in only one way—she did love him, she did actually love him. It was not the common sort of obstacle that stood in his way. At least he was to be spared the pain of hearing her say that she cared for him as a sister cares for her brother.

'Some wall is between us?' Jim asked.

'A wall is between us indeed.'

'Walls have fallen down before now.'

'This wall is not likely to fall down. Mr. Conrad, I owe you too much confidence, and I like you too well, not to let you know the whole reality, and not to put my secret absolutely into your hands. Mr. Conrad, I am married!'

'Oh!'

Conrad gave an inarticulate groan, and sprang from his seat. He saw nothing for a moment—he felt as if the floor were rocking under his feet, and the windows darkening before his eyes.

'Yes, I am married. I do not expect to see him again.' She paused over the word 'him'; she seemed as if she could not or would not say 'my husband.' 'But I am married—and he is young; he is well able to fight with life, and I wish him well, and I wish him happy, but I do not wish to see him again. There, do not ask me any more. I need not tell you never to breathe a word of this to anyone else.'

‘Oh!’

He made an impatient motion as if to repudiate and shake away any possibility of his being guilty of such an offence.

‘No, of course, I know you will not. I don’t even know why I said anything about it.’

‘Does anyone else know of this?’

‘Gertrude Morefield alone. She knows everything, except that I have told you. I shall not tell her that for the present, but I shall tell it to her some time—soon, perhaps, if things should go as I could wish.’

‘What things, and what do you wish?’

Poor Jim dropped back into his seat, still so stunned by the news that he felt himself putting questions in a queer, perfunctory sort of way. It came back upon his memory strangely how he felt one day when he got a heavy fall in the hunting-field, and was unconscious for a time, and that when he came partly to himself again he began asking commonplace questions of those around him concerning the incidents of the field.

‘I should wish for the happiness of some of my friends,’ she said, with a sweet smile, ‘if it could be.’

‘Don’t wish for my happiness,’ Jim said.

‘Why not?’

‘Oh, how can you?’ he asked, almost angrily. ‘You know that I can’t be happy any more than you can.’

‘I cannot be happy, certainly,’ she said. ‘Nothing could bring about happiness for me. The wreck that I have made of my own life—and—and of the lives of others, will be a bitter memory to me all through my time. But, my friend, you are different; things are not quite so bad with you. There are other women in the world——’

‘Not for me,’ he interposed vehemently.

‘You think so now—yes, and I honour you for it; but Time brings change.’

He made an impatient gesture of protest.

‘No, I don’t want to make too much of that now; but it is a truth, my friend. Once I thought there could be no man in the world but one for me. But stay—yes, there is something more I do wish to tell you. I want to excuse myself in your eyes.’

‘There is no need,’ he said sullenly. ‘I blame you for nothing.’

‘I blame myself so much, and I cannot have it on my mind without telling you. I want you to know why I did not bluntly discourage you days and days ago, when it could have been done in the easiest way.’

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘you might tell me that. I am sure you had only the kindest purpose, but I think I should like you to tell me of that.’

‘I encouraged your coming here from the first, did I not?’ she asked, with a certain hesitation.

‘Yes, I thought you did.’

‘And I was always very friendly and confidential with you, was I not?’

‘You were, indeed; I thought so always,’ poor afflicted Jim said, all the memories of those happy days crowding back upon him and crushing him. ‘Yes, you made me love you.’

‘I never meant it, my friend. I encouraged you, urged you, because I thought I was helping you. I liked you from the first, and I thought you liked me, but not in that way. Listen’—and she sank her voice almost to a whisper—‘I thought you liked me because—because—I was the friend of Gertrude Morefield!’

Jim once again sprang from his seat.

‘Good God!’ he said. ‘How could you have thought that?’

‘I did think it. Why shouldn’t I? You knew her; I am sure you admired her. Why should I not have thought that you cared for her? She liked you, and thought highly of you, and—well, anyhow, there was nothing to make me see why you should not have been in love with her. And I thought you were in love with her—I did indeed, and until quite, quite lately. I thought you came to see me only because by seeing me you got to see her. Yes, I did. It was only yesterday I found out the truth; for I know it is the truth, since you have told me so.’

‘Oh yes, it is the truth,’ he said sadly.

‘And then I made up my mind that I must tell you, at the risk of any misconception—misconstruction—anything.’

‘There isn’t any—there couldn’t be any,’ Jim murmured.

‘No, I know that now—yes, of course; indeed, I thought it then. I love her so much, and I like you so much—oh yes, I have so much love for you—that I thought it would be happy for you both to be brought together. I believed I was doing you both a service. Well, come, I have been very blunt and outspoken with you; may I be a little more blunt and outspoken still? May I?’

‘Say anything you please.’

‘The tone of your voice sounds a little harsh. Is your heart bitter towards me?’

‘No, God knows!’ he said.

His heart was torn with love for her, compassion for her, the horror and despair of losing her.

‘Well, what I want to say is this: ‘Is it too late even yet? Is it quite too late?’

‘Too late for what?’

‘Too late for her?’

‘Clelia! Clelia! Do you really think love can be forgotten in that way—in that space of time?’

‘Most things may be forgotten,’ Clelia said, with a sad smile. ‘I have found it so. Love may be forgotten; promises, pledges, may be forgotten; honour may be forgotten; yes, even self-interest may be forgotten——’

‘Is nothing, then, remembered?’ he asked disconsolately, wonderingly, as he looked into her quick-moving, gleaming eyes.

‘I don’t know,’ she answered stammeringly. ‘Perhaps, with a woman like me, the sense of injury, the hatred of treason, of betrayal, is likely to be immortal. But come, let us talk more quietly. Let us, whatever we do, not get into sentiment. I have dealt fairly with you; I have told you a great deal. I have tried to console even your self-love’—and these words went to the very heart of the young man, for he could not but know that self-love is mixed up with the other love, with the deep and passionate love for another. ‘Now you know that I cannot marry you. I have really no husband, and I shall never have a lover. You and I can never come nearer than we are at this moment—never, never! We are friends—real, true friends—and we never can be anything else. Why can you not love my friend—my other friend? I love her. She is well worth the love of any honourable man. Oh! if I had only known such a man when I was younger—when I was young!’

The girl started from her seat and stood by the window for a moment, with her back turned to him. What

memories, he wondered, were passing through her perturbed mind as she moved away from him and looked out of that window? Suddenly she turned round and faced him anew.

‘You would make her happy,’ she said abruptly, ‘and I think she would make you happy. Oh, my dear friend, the thing we call passionate love is much best left alone in this world! It never comes to anything but frustration and disappointment. She is a good girl, and a loving girl, and a clever girl. If I were a man, I should love her. Why should you not try to love her—if only for my sake?’

‘I can’t transfer my love,’ he said, almost sullenly. ‘It’s not like a public-house license with me. I can’t have you, that’s quite clear. I don’t want any other woman.’

‘You told me yourself you were in love before——’

‘I told you I thought I was in love.’

‘Very well; you think you are in love with me now.’

‘Think!’ he said angrily.

‘Oh, my friend, I do not wish to hurt you in any way. You do love me now; but you thought you loved the other woman. I do not ask who she was—it is no concern of mine to know; and perhaps—perhaps you may be cured of this hopeless love for me. You have told me that you love me, and at first it terrified me, knowing what I did, and what you did not know. But I confess it—and, oh! forgive me when I say it—that it did gladden me to hear from your own lips that you loved me! How wicked I am! and yet not so wicked as to let you go on without knowing the whole truth!’

‘I have no thought of blame for you, Clelia,’ he said. ‘I shall hold you always in my heart. I shall never trouble you any more. I told you before this that I have one merit which a woman ought to prize—I am a man very easily got rid of.’

‘Oh!’ she exclaimed—‘got rid of? As if I wanted to get rid of you!’

‘I don’t accuse you of any personal intention that way,’ he said, with a melancholy smile. ‘But it is clear that you and I can’t keep together on the same terms any more. Very well; I give you up. But I think I would rather that you did not recommend me to take some other woman to fill your place.’

‘You hardly know how good and sweet she is.’

‘What does that matter?’ he asked. ‘She is not you.’

‘She is ever so much better.’

‘Then, she is too good for me, and so it comes to the same.’

‘Must I tell you something more?’ Clelia asked, in a tone of one who makes a last appeal.

‘I’ve said already—tell me anything you like.’

‘Mr. Conrad, listen: Gertrude Morefield is in love with you.’

‘She isn’t; I don’t believe it. She has told me herself over and over again that love has never entered into her life.’

‘Love had not knocked at her door, perhaps, when you first came her way; but now it is different. Most girls talk like that—until the man comes—the man who makes them learn a different story. I understand every thought in the girl’s mind, and every feeling in her heart, and she is in love with you—Jim!’

The word ‘Jim’ penetrated him with a curious intermixture of pleasure and pain. The thrill of pleasure came first, and then the pang of pain suddenly followed. Never had she called him by his familiar name before—there was the sudden sense of rapture. But she called him by his name now as she was striving to interest him in another

woman—striving to hand him over to another woman—she called him by his name to signify that there might be friendship and affection between them, and nothing more—and there came in the pain. She could not have chosen any better, more tender, more hopeless form of signifying to him that all was over between them except friendship. And to the lover friendship seems so barren and so cold and so cruel! When the lover can warm himself in winter by the light of a star, he will be able to comfort himself for the refusal of a woman’s love by the offer of her friendship.

Jim was a plucky and a manly fellow. He was quite up to the comprehension of the fact that everything does not go comfortably and right with men in human affairs. He pulled himself together.

‘All right,’ he said. ‘What do you want me to do?’

‘I want you to forget me.’

Then he broke down.

‘That be ——!’ he said abruptly, and then at once grew ashamed of himself, and hastily explained. ‘I beg pardon, I am sure—I didn’t mean that, of course—but what I did mean to say was that I can’t quite promise to forget you—all at once, anyhow. You must ask me something easier,’ he added, with a smile that did its best to be heroic.

‘I ask you something which I am sure will be much for your own good and your own happiness in the end——’

‘Yes?’ he interjected dismally.

‘I ask you to think of Gertrude Morefield. I tell you that she is the sweetest girl I know, and the truest and fondest—she is worth a score of me—and she is in love with you, Jim, as sure as——’

‘As I am in love with you!’

‘Yes,’ she answered, with a reckless smile on her pale face; ‘and as sure as I should be in love with you—if I could—if I dared.’

‘And do you think,’ he asked almost sternly, ‘that that is a good way of prevailing on me to go and make love to another woman—to tell me that you know I am in love with you, and that you would love me if you dared?’

‘I do—yes, I do: for we are reasonable creatures, and we are not mere boy and girl—and you cannot marry me—and I cannot—love you—and we both know that there are different kinds of love—and that the wild romantic love is not the one that wears the best. Yes, I have been very outspoken with you; I have shown you my whole heart. Nothing is possible between us but friendship; and if you only feel as I do, nothing is impossible for us but the extinction of our friendship!’

‘Friendship is ice!’ he exclaimed.

‘Friendship is solid earth,’ she answered, ‘and love is the glow of the sky which we cannot reach—or the light of the stars which thrills our souls on a bright summer night, but cannot guide our way. Come, now, I am growing sentimental myself, and I don’t intend to do that. Well, will you think of what I have told you?’

‘Think of the hard fact that you are married, and cannot love me? How soon do you fancy I shall cease to think about that?’

‘Oh no, my friend; I know that you will think about that. What I meant was to ask you to think over what I have told you about Gertrude Morefield. Remember, her mother may be carried off at any time, and she may be left alone.’

‘And then you would propose to go out of civilization altogether?’

‘I would much rather she remained in civilization, if she were sheltered by you.’

Jim’s mind was passion-tossed. He was madly in love with Clelia, he had the deepest feeling of compassion for her, and yet he was angry with her. He was hurt by the thought that she could turn him over to any other woman. She could not really have cared about him, he thought, if she could coolly propose that he should thus transfer his love, and give another woman the key of his heart, or invite another woman to have the key to his heart, but not his heart. And yet what better could he do? Young men in love have no horizon—no proportions—no perspective. Jim could see nothing for him in the future but the futile love for a woman he could not marry, whom he could not make happy. If there was in the world some other woman whom by marrying he could make happy, why not turn to some use an existence which would otherwise be all in vain?

‘Yes; I will think of what you have told me.’

His voice choked a little as he spoke. An unaccustomed moisture came into his eyes.

‘That is all I ask,’ she replied.

‘But it won’t come to anything,’ he said abruptly, and he rose to go.

She hardly appeared to be listening.

‘Oh yes, one thing more I must ask of you; and I shall beseech it of you, if you will,’ she said, ‘and if nothing less than a beseeching prayer will avail to touch you——’

‘Oh!’ the poor young man groaned out, ‘as if you had not only to ask whatever you wanted of me!’

‘Yes, yes, I know—I know quite well; oh, my friend, I understand you quite! Do you think I do not understand a nature like yours? Do you think I am not able to understand it?’

Poor Jim was embarrassed. He did not know that his was a peculiarly exalted nature, and yet he did not want to be rude enough to disparage her gift of divining by her own fancy some peculiarly exalted nature; so he only said:

‘I will promise anything you ask me to promise.’

‘And you will keep your word, I know.’

‘A man always keeps his word,’ Jim said, almost sternly.

‘Yes, I know—a man that is a man. But a woman that is a woman does not always keep her word. Anyhow, you are not a woman, and you will keep your word. Well, then, promise me this——’

‘I will promise you anything you like!’

‘Promise me that you will never try to find out who my husband is, or anything of my unhappy story, or try to meet my husband, or try to do anything at all to help me—in that way, of course, I mean.’

‘From my soul,’ he said fervently. ‘I can promise to do just as you wish in all that relates to your life-history.’

‘And not more?’ she asked, with a sweet, inviting smile.

‘Not all that relates to the life-history of someone else—of someone else?’

‘Oh, I have gone far enough,’ he said impatiently. ‘I can’t promise to love anybody but you.’

There was a moment’s pause. Then he began again:

‘I suppose I must not go with you to Algiers, or Egypt, or wherever you are going?’

‘Oh no,’ she said; ‘you must not go with us. You see, you say you are very fond of me——’

‘Say! say! I am very fond of you,’ he interrupted her quite angrily.

‘Well, yes; I know what you mean, and I believe all you tell me. But if that is so, or since it is so, it is quite clear, my friend, that you and I had better not go travelling

about in company, even though we have other companions—or, as I would rather put it now, because we have other companions.’

‘Why is it worse because we have other companions?’ he asked, in a sinking and sickly tone.

‘Why? Because, if I am anything at all real, I am a good friend to my friend.’

‘But what has that to do——’

‘What has that to do? As if you didn’t know! Because Gertrude Morefield is my friend, and I will not have you going about with her and thinking of me all the time.’

‘I should be thinking of you all the time,’ he said grimly.

‘So you have told me, and I believe you; and therefore I must not have it, and I won’t have it. Tell me you will think of Gertrude, and you may go over the world with us.’

‘I am very fond of Miss Morefield,’ he said, in a stammering sort of way; ‘but I cannot think of her while you are there.’

‘Well, and you know you must not think of me at all! I have told you more than I ought to have told, but I wanted to save you from needless pain if I could; and so I gave you the full opportunity of getting out of all difficulty by saying that you were not likely in the least to fall in love with me. You see, you missed an easy chance of escape.’

‘How can you talk like that?’ he asked. ‘Is there not full truth between you and me?’

‘Oh yes, I hope so—I feel so.’

‘Then, let us talk the truth. I love you, and I shall always love you——’

‘Oh, hush, my friend! I must not listen to talk like

that; and you, if I know you, will not want me to listen to it. Let us not spoil a dear and possible friendship by a wholly impossible attempt at love. Do remember that, after all, there is nothing better in life than friendship, and that, whether we like it or not, there is nothing else possible between you and me.'

'Then, I must not go with you?' he pleaded.

'No; certainly you must not. I will urge Mrs. Morefield to leave Paris at once, and you can say that you have to go back to London.'

'Must I go back to London?' asked Jim distractedly.

'You must indeed. You must find a career there, and you may find out when you are there the woman that you really love.'

'I have found her,' he said.

'No; you thought you had. You thought you had found her once before; try the third wave—that, they say, lifts one to success and the shore.'

'Oh!' he exclaimed, and he left her.

She would not forget that fanciful, that fancied first love of his. The words she spoke stung him. His heart was bitter against her, and yet how he loved her!

CHAPTER XI.

THE SWEET SORROW OF PARTING.

JIM'S last night in Paris had come. What a time he had had of it in Paris—this time! How happy he had been—how miserable he had been! How delightful, how distressful, how perplexed and utterly futile, it had been! Now all was over, and he was going back to London, to Clarges Street and the Voyagers' Club, and he must take

up the work—the prosaic work—of life again, or rather, indeed, for the first time and at the beginning. ‘Muss selber nun Philister sein,’ as the German student-song puts it; must come down from his high horse of fancy and imagination and impossible love-making and be himself a Philistine and a worker, like everybody else. And a worker for what? He could live well enough, he could pay for his daily bread, and his club and his clothes—and what did he want else, now that his dreams had all evaporated? Or why not go to some new country? A new country is a new career. Why not California, or Australia, or South Africa?

Ah! and the thought flashed suddenly through him. Why not hear fully out the schemes of Waley? Why not get to know the mysterious chief, who would doubtless turn out to be not mysterious at all, but only some plucky British adventurer with a heart for any fate? What could suit Jim better in his present mood? Westward ho!—Eastward ho!—Northward ho!—Southward ho!—anywhere ho!—it was all one to him.

‘I am glad to go back to London,’ he said to himself. ‘I have no further business here’—as, indeed, he had not.

For days and nights, under the charm of Clelia Vine’s company, he had forgotten all about the mystery of the ring. Now, he could not tell why, he took it out and studied its hieroglyphics all over again. Was it because it soothed him to remind himself that others had suffered and were suffering as well as he? Perhaps that was the reason at the bottom of his consciousness, but on the surface of his consciousness no reason showed itself. It seemed to him as if he had taken up the ring by the merest haphazard. But having taken it up, he studied it anew and tried to read its riddle.

He put it before him on his dressing-table that last night in Paris, and he began to think—not of it, but of himself. He had been hit very hard this time, he thought. He had been hit two ways—he was bitterly disappointed about Clelia, and he was, perhaps, to be the source of bitter disappointment to Gertrude, for whom already he felt a warm affection. He could never forget how when he was in the depths of his first love-trouble she came and all unconsciously stepped between him and his fighting soul. He remembered the music of her voice that first night when he ventured to speak to her. It seemed as if she had come to him and put a friendly hand upon his shoulder, and spoken words of encouragement into his ear, and told him that there was something yet to live for in the world. And now he came to learn that she had grown to care about him—and he must disappoint her. For he could not help himself—he loved Clelia Vine. And Clelia had only encouraged him because she believed that through her he was seeking to approach Gertrude Morefield.

There was enough for him to think about without embarrassing himself in futile and speculative conjectures over the troubles and the disappointments of other and unknown lovers whose very existence he had only come to guess at by deciphering the hieroglyphic posy of a ring. But to study the ring mystery, which of late he had nearly forgotten, had a new fascination for him now. He began to feel as if he had been ungrateful to the ring—had renounced his duty to it while he thought he was happy—had wholly forgotten the woman with the wrecked life whom he had created for himself out of his own conjectures during the first days of his visit to Paris. He did not allow himself to think as to how he should meet the Morefields again, or whether he ought to meet them again.

He did not even occupy himself much with any conjectures as to the sad story of Clelia's life. What would be the use? She was gone from him—she could be nothing to him; the very kindness and very tenderness of her words and her manner to him filled him with a new despair. She was so frank with him, because she never had really cared for him. Her great anxiety about him was to try to get him to offer himself to another woman. He set himself deliberately to study the ring lying before him, and almost began to regard it as a talisman which he ought for ever to have kept with him, and which he had laid aside and forgotten. The talisman was bound to have its revenge, he thought. At last, worn out with thinking, he went to bed, and fell asleep with the ring under his pillow. He seemed as if he could not sleep without it now—as if he must never part from it again until he had read its mystery, and found out its rightful owner.

Then he woke with a great start and a cry. The cry it was that wakened him. For he had had a dream which seemed to him extraordinary now, and yet was as a dream that might well have come before. Was it a mere nightmare? or was it an inspiration? He thought that he was sitting somewhere with Clelia, long before—before he had ever met her—and he saw on her finger the ring which he now held in his care, and under the pillow. Yes, there it was on her finger, with its enamelled and hieroglyphic letters on the outside. The whole idea broke upon him like a revelation, and yet, when he began to waken up fully and to get his senses clearly about him, he could not think that it was anything but a wild chimera of the night.

All the same, it took possession of him. Clelia had

been in Paris longer than Mrs. Morefield knew of ; that he had thought quite certain, even when he did not attach the slightest importance to the possibility. For some reason or other the two girls had not allowed Mrs. Morefield to know exactly the day on which Miss Vine came to Paris. There was not much to go on in that—but there possibly was something. The dream might be explained easily enough. All unconsciously to himself Conrad might have been working the story of Clelia into the mystery of the ring, and full consciousness may have burst forth in blossom, as it often does, in a dream.

The idea seized hold of him. Francisco—Rosita—there was nothing to suggest Miss Vine in that. Still, here is a young and beautiful woman with a sad story of some kind, who was in Paris the day when the ring was thrown away, and whose presence in Paris that day was known only to her one most intimate friend—surely there was something suggestive in all that? What could he do? How could he test the truth of any conjecture? What right had he even to attempt to find out? Mrs. Morefield had said she never made any attempt to get at Clelia's secret—why should he propose to be less discreet? Oh yes; he told himself a reason soon enough, as he sat up in his bed that perplexed morning. Because he might be able to help her; because he was a man and knew the world—did he, poor fellow?—and because he could desire nothing more than to devote himself to her service. To do him justice, this was the uppermost thought in his mind. She was entangled in an unhappy marriage, and of course there was no hope or chance for him. But youth is often very generous in its love, and glories in the idea of suppression and self-sacrifice and service rendered to the loved one at the cost of one's own self-effacement and surrender. As

men grow older this feeling grows colder, but it is sometimes very fond and true in youth.

This was the feeling that filled Jim Conrad's mind. All hope for himself must die. But he might be able to serve and to help her. How, he did not even stop to consider. It was the early hour of a lovely autumnal morning in Paris, and the sun was streaming in at the windows, and all the world was young again, and anything seemed possible to the generous and half-poetic mind. Jim had now a sudden, wild, inane longing to see Miss Vine—if she must be called Miss Vine—once again before he went back to London and to his new life. But he did not want to see her in the presence of the Morefields, and he had yet to pay his formal visit of farewell to the Morefields, and he did not want a common farewell to all.

How times had changed for him since that day—the other day, ages ago, a few weeks ago—since first he met the Morefields at the *table d'hôte*! All the world had changed for him since then. And he had a strange foreshadowing creeping over him that the change which had been was as nothing to the change that would be. In the mind and in the heart, in the spirit and in the sense of this healthy, vigorous, plucky, well-read, well-cultured young man, there was what Hamlet calls 'a kind of fighting,' that sometimes, he could not tell wherefore, made him wish that he were a woman and could relieve his feelings by what women call 'a good cry.' But in place of having a good cry Jim had a bad breakfast. Not that the food of the Grand Hotel was bad, but that the appetite somehow would not come just then for any food.

Then he wandered out and found his way to the Bois de Boulogne, and to the accustomed place. He leaned over the railings and looked at the still somewhat far-

distant spot where he had picked up the ring—the ill-gifted ring, as he assumed it to be. His dream had naturally revived his interest in the ring, and he thought he would go and stand, as nearly as his memory would allow him, on the very spot where he had found it.

‘I want to see it for the last time,’ he said to himself, ‘for I shall never come to Paris again.’

Alas! how easily fond youth tells itself in its heart-trouble that it will never come to this, that, or the other particular place again!

Just as he was about to scramble over the railings he happened to look round, and light came into the avenue, for there was Clelia Vine walking slowly and all alone on the footpath, and coming towards him.

Suddenly, irresistibly, the thought of his dream flashed up in his mind. He went to meet her. The unexpected meeting seemed to have embarrassed them both. She was the first to recover her self-possession.

‘So early,’ she said with a kindly smile, and something very like a blush.

‘I often walk here in the morning,’ he answered stupidly. ‘Don’t you?’

‘Sometimes—yes—not often—seldom indeed—only when the mood takes me.’

‘The mood? What mood?’

‘Why, that mood,’ she answered, now with self-possession quite recovered. ‘The mood to walk out early, and to walk here.’

‘Oh yes,’ he said blankly, ‘quite so.’ Then he hurriedly added: ‘I am leaving for London to-night, you know.’

‘As if I didn’t know! As if I hadn’t driven you away!’

‘Oh no, you haven’t driven me away.’

‘Well, of course you will see Mrs. Morefield and Gertrude before you leave Paris?’

‘Yes, indeed yes. I could not possibly leave without saying good-bye to them; I owe them too much of kindness.’

‘You speak very solemnly,’ she said, with a somewhat melancholy smile. ‘It is not likely that you are to say a farewell of them for ever.’

‘Well, I don’t know. I have vague ideas of going into some quite new far-off country and striking out some new path—but never mind about that just now. What way are you walking?’

‘I was thinking of turning back,’ she said sadly.

For she knew what was meant by the longing to go off to the far foreign country.

‘May I walk a little with you? I am not going back to the hotel just yet.’

‘Oh yes, I shall be delighted—at least, I don’t quite know about being delighted, for I am sorry to hear you talk about throwing yourself away on some strange and far-off country.’

‘One must do something.’

‘One needn’t do that.’

They now turned round and began to walk slowly towards the Arch of Triumph and the city. They walked for a few paces in silence. Conrad had much to say, or thought he had, but the words froze upon his lips. A woman less sincere than Clelia would have affected not to notice his embarrassment. She came to the point at once.

‘You have something to say to me, Mr. Conrad; I know you have.’

‘Not very much, or to any great purpose; but——’

‘Yes, tell me.’

She spoke encouragingly, winningly.

‘Is there anything I could help you in?’ he asked bluntly.

‘You? Oh no, there is nothing—nothing at all.’

‘Why not?’

‘Because—what could you do?’

‘Ah, well, that is exactly what I do not know; but you might, perhaps, be able to tell me.’

‘Oh no, there is nothing. You see, I have good friends.’

‘Women—yes.’

‘Come, now, don’t let Gertrude hear you speak in that contemptuous tone about women and their help!’

‘Indeed, I had not the faintest notion of the kind. Only there are things in which a man can help a woman better than a woman can. Don’t you remember the story of the Woman’s Rights woman in America who happened to get left alone in a log-house on the frontier of an Indian territory?’

‘No. What was the matter with her?’

‘Well, she confessed to her secret heart that, when it came to a question of loading and discharging a shot-gun, she kinder preferred to have a man around.’

Clelia smiled a sort of thanks-for-kind-inquiries smile.

‘Yes,’ she answered; ‘but there is no need of a shot-gun in this case.’

‘No, I suppose not; but you would understand my illustration, all the same.’

‘My dear friend, of course I understand your illustration. I think I understand you and your illustration too. But, in plain words, you can do nothing for me. Nothing in life can ever be well with me again——’

‘Oh, pray don’t talk like that!’ he exclaimed passionately, in protest against this sentence of despair.

‘What is the use of not saying it? I don’t say it to everyone. I say it only to you—and to Gertrude; I have never said it even to Mrs. Morefield, whom I love with quite a tender affection. Nothing in life can ever be well with me again.’

‘I do not even know your trouble,’ he said rather sullenly.

‘You do not. Why should you be troubled with it? You cannot help me out of my trouble.’

‘Is your husband living?’ he asked abruptly.

‘He is—at least, I suppose he is—’

‘Do you hope he is?’

The words escaped him before he quite understood what their effect on her would be.

She drew herself back with the appearance of a certain shock.

‘My husband is my husband!’ she said coldly. ‘I am not likely to wish for his death.’

‘No—no—of course not,’ poor Jim said disconsolately. ‘I didn’t mean that at all!’

‘Then I wonder, Mr. Conrad, what did you mean?’

‘I really don’t know. I had a vague but very strong sense of wishing to serve you somehow; and I suppose I wanted first of all to get at the facts of your story.’

‘You can’t get at the facts of my story, or any of them,’ she said, ‘unless I choose to tell you; and I shall not tell you, for it would not do me any good or you any good. Now, Mr. Conrad, listen to me. You have been very kind, and sympathetic; and sweet to me. I value—oh, you do not know how much—your kindness and your sweetness and your sympathy; but it is only a waste of your time to try to help me in any way. There are others whom you might help; you can’t help me. You do not know anything about me.’

‘Suppose I should ever know—suppose I should ever come to guess something about you?’

‘You could not,’ she said composedly; ‘it is impossible.’

‘Impossible! Oh, nothing in life is impossible. I may know yet.’

‘About me?’

‘About you—you—you!’

She stopped short.

‘You have told me,’ she said, ‘that you will never try to find out.’

‘Yes, I have told you that, and of course I shall never try to find out. But suppose I were, by some strange fate, intermixed somehow in your life?’

‘That, I hope, Mr. Conrad——’

‘Mr. Conrad! You called me Jim only yesterday.’

She smiled a sweet, pleading smile.

‘Then I was saying good-bye.’

‘Now you are really saying good-bye.’

‘Very well, then, if it pleases you—Jim.’

‘Yes—go on.’

‘What were we saying? Oh yes, you said that you might by some strange fate be intermixed somehow in my life.’

‘Yes—well?’

‘Well, I hope you will never be, for your sake and for mine. There, good-bye.’

That parting was over.

CHAPTER XII.

BACK TO LONDON.

JIM CONRAD found himself again in London. He had been there for several weeks. It was late in the year, and there was a dull slight fog, not disguising, but only con-

fusing, reality, and even Piccadilly looked dismal, and Jim's heart went metaphorically down to his boots. He shivered mentally over the prospects of the winter. He had been hurt very badly, he told himself again and again, and all there was left for him was to get over it as soon as he possibly could. Life looked very dreary before him, and the only prospect that seemed to attract him was that of going away to some new country on some new enterprise, and not coming back any more. When one is very young one has such dreams. Later on, men learn that they generally come back from all sorts of places, and that London does not care whether they come or whether they go. That, too, is somewhat of a healthful, invigorating experience, which helps to knock the nonsense out of one. But the experience had not yet come to Jim Conrad, and so he brooded over his personal trouble in his own sort of way.

Of course, he was far too manly and too well trained a youth to show any of his troubles to the outer world. For all his boyish nature, he had a good deal of the reflective social philosopher about him, and he was quite possessed of the fact that nobody cares a straw for the love-troubles of anybody else. Jim could remember some terrible bores, who used to inflict upon him all the story of their own griefs and failures in love. These were certainly many shades less exasperating than the class of cads, well born or lowly, who came on him with long tales of their triumphs and conquests in love. For such as these Jim had nothing but contempt, and could not even put on an appearance of patience and sympathy.

But the poor fellows who liked to tell of their misfortunes ought by that very right, that sacred right, of misfortune, to have some claim to be heard by com-

passionate ears. Yet, all the same, Jim found them bores, and he was sure they would in their turn find him a bore if he were to ask them to listen to his tale of woe. So he kept his tale of woe to himself; and he suffered much, but without any parade of his sufferings. He did not choose that any daws should peck at his heart. Therefore he did not wear it on his sleeve.

He quite appreciated his own experiences. He thoroughly understood the vast difference between the sort of sentimentalism in which he had spontaneously indulged himself towards his good-for-nothing first-love, and the deep unsought-for passion with which he was filled for Clelia Vine. In truth, a young man's first-love, like a young woman's, is in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred a mere phantom and ecstasy. The young man or the young woman is longing to be in love with somebody, and the first alluring figure which comes in the way seems heaven-sent to be the object of homage.

Jim now smiled half pitifully, half contemptuously, at his facetious and fanciful attempt at love-making, and thought to himself often, even in his present distress, how lucky it was for him that the girl had found a better match, and had frankly thrown him over. Suppose it had been his fate to marry that girl! He would rather, a thousand times rather, have his present disappointment than that sort of success. And yet what a short time had passed since his Rosaline seemed all-sufficing to him!—the time before he met Juliet—Clelia Vine.

Clelia Vine! The name sent a sort of pang through him. Clelia Vine! Was Vine her name now? No, he supposed not, he assumed not. She had probably, for whatever reason, gone back to her maiden name. Mrs. Morefield always called her Clelia Vine, and yet did not

know that she ever had been married. Should he ever come to know her name? Should he ever come to know her husband? It would be strange if he did come to meet him without knowing in the least who he was. Such things were very possible in a place like London, where everybody comes and whence everybody goes, and where, roughly speaking, nobody really knows anything about anybody.

Meanwhile Conrad went about in the usual way. He frequented the Voyagers' Club; he looked into a theatre now and then; he read the morning and the evening papers; he strolled sometimes in the lonely and spectral Row. Not many of his more intimate friends were yet in town. There were hardly any doors to open to him. As he put it himself, there was hardly a house where, if he knocked, there was any chance of the latch being lifted. But there were still, or already, a good many of his chance and bachelor friends knocking about town, and on the whole Jim had a fairly good time. He tried over and over again to settle down and begin his first novel, but his mind did not seem to bite into any subject. If he had been really hard up, he would probably have found a story long before. But if a young man has enough to live upon for the present without recourse to literature, he is apt to be very fastidious about his first choice of a literary venture. Jim had a vague notion still that he ought to write something about the ring, but it was only a vague notion, and had not consolidated or crystallized itself at all so far.

It should be said that he had shown the ring to a London goldsmith and jeweller, with whom his family had long been acquainted, and whom he felt that he could trust, and from this authority he learned that

the ring was undoubtedly of an English family pattern, but was apparently made in India, of delicate-fingered Indian workmanship. Some member of an English household, being in India, had probably had a family ring duplicated under the hands of Indian artificers.

This may have brought Conrad a little nearer to the gate of the mystery, but it certainly did not furnish him with any clue or thread to guide his way in that direction. It did not seem to give any vitality to his dream in Paris—that last night there. He was beginning to be in a sort of way impatient with the ring, in the mood of Alexander when he relieved his mind about the plaguing Gordian knot. He sometimes could have found it in his heart to throw the ring into the Thames or the Serpentine.

Jim's rooms at Clarges Street were on the second-floor. The sitting-room had a balcony, and looked on the street. The rooms were modest, like their owner's means. Still, they had what might be called an air of expectancy about them. The younger son of a younger son, if he feels himself conscious of any capacity in himself at all, is always bound to be expectant. Such a youth cannot but think that he will some day or other add to his gift of birth his gift of brains.

Now, Jim Conrad had got into the confirmed habit of believing that he had in him that which passeth show—in other words, that he had a literary endowment which would one day be materialized into cheques. Therefore, he had set out his sitting-room and bedroom with a certain appearance of luxury. He was fond of great books in precious editions, with uncut leaves and approved bindings. He was fond of first editions, and other such costly and keenly-competed-for possessions. Perhaps he did not greatly care to read the books which he had thus stored up

in the precious packets ; at all events, if he did read the texts of the authors, and he sometimes did, he wisely preferred to read them in cheap editions.

His sitting-room contained some good etchings and some fine prints. Also, there were some colour-sketches, given him by professional painters and others, mostly, perhaps, by amateur artists who were friends of his, and among his books were counted, it should be said, many presentation copies, chiefly, it is true, by authors who had not as yet achieved supreme distinction. On the whole, there was a look of ease, and even of luxury, about the rooms which might have beguiled many a fond creditor, and have suggested the idea of great expectations.

Jim had had his own expectations. A near relative, who was very rich, had once undertaken to have charge of the boy and to make him his heir ; but the near relative had, at the age of fifty-five, fallen in love with a pretty and penniless young woman, and married her, and become the parent of two children, the eldest a boy, and there was an end of Jim Conrad's chances. Jim did not mind very much. The world was all before him, and he had enough to live on in his mother's money, and he thought his uncle was right enough in marrying again ; and, anyhow, the world was all before him, and he did not care. But his rooms in Clarges Street still bore evidence to the existence of the days when he believed that he was the destined heir to his uncle's fortune. Even yet, when that hope had set for ever, Jim managed to keep on buying curious editions, and had a credit with Hachette for the looking out of obsolete volumes and rare chap-books. Each man has his own idea of a prize ; but, unluckily for himself, Jim Conrad had set his heart on a considerable variety of prizes. He wanted the best of everything, and

he certainly ought to have had his uncle's fortune in order to gratify his wants.

Nobody knew whence he had got the literary ambition which had for a long time filled his mind. Not one of his family had done much, or, indeed, anything, in the literary way. The Conrads of Northumberland had, on the whole, rather despised literature. They were somewhat of the opinion of the German official at one of the small German courts of past days, who, in giving his authoritative directions as to precedence, declared that the professors and the literary men ranked immediately after the boot-blacks. But Jim, thus wholly discouraged, had from his earliest days had a passion for literature and art. He was constantly in the company of painters, and poets, and dramatists, and critics, and novelists, and the writers of leading articles, and such-like folk. He loved the Voyagers' Club because he had a vast yearning for foreign travel, and he made it part of his ambition to scour the seas some day. He had some diffidence when it was first proposed to him that he should be put up for membership at the Voyagers' Club.

'But I have never voyaged,' he pleaded.

'My good fellow,' one of his friends said, 'we are a very old club; and do you know what the travelling qualification is?'

No, Jim did not know.

'Five hundred miles out of London!'

'Oh, I think I have accomplished that,' Jim modestly said. 'Would Naples do?'

'Right you are,' his friend replied; and in due course of time Jim was elected a member of the Voyagers' Club.

Jim was, on the whole, very happy when he got settled down into his independent bachelor's quarters and the

Voyagers' Club. He visited other clubs as well—literary, dramatic, and journalistic. He frequented the first nights at the theatres, and he went behind when the curtain had fallen, and was received and welcomed cordially with hosts of other friends by the managers and manageresses and the leading actors and actresses, and drank champagne to their healths and successes, and had a bright time of it generally. Then he knew a good many men in politics; and, in fact, he had a varied opportunity of studying London life, which he naturally enjoyed. But amidst all these different attractions and distractions he had pretty well made up his mind that his gift and his desire was to be a writer of fiction—when his love affair came across him, and for the time, at least, knocked all the fiction out of him.

Then he went off to Paris to distract his mind away from his love-trouble; and then, as we have seen, he fell into a far deeper love-trouble. It is very much like that in ordinary life. If you try to get over a light trouble here, you only fall under a much heavier trouble elsewhere. So when Jim Conrad came back to London, he came back utterly hopeless and disconsolate, telling himself that the only thing for him in life to do was to go in dismally for literature, and dismally to stick to it, or else to get off on any wild enterprise to some foreign country, and make a career there, or get killed there—and so end. He gave a fair chance to the literary project. He sat down before the desk for hours together, and stared at the paper and his blotting-pad, and could not begin his novel.

‘It won’t do,’ he said to himself. ‘I must try a new career and a far-off country.’

It was in this mood of mind that he found himself thinking more and more of Mr. Waley and Mr. Waley’s chief.

CHAPTER XIII.

SIR FRANCIS ROSE.

JIM went to dine at the Voyagers' Club one evening. He never dined at home. In Clarges Street lodgings they do not count on single young men dining at home. The season had not quite arrived for Jim or anybody else to be much invited out to dine, and so he was very glad of the Voyagers' Club. There were not many people in the dining-room when he went in; but he went in rather early, for he intended to see something at a theatre that night, and seeing anything at a theatre meant an early dinner; and Jim had not yet grown old enough to be much put out by an early dinner. So he settled down to his table, and he looked over the bill of fare; and he did not seem to care what he had to eat, but he chose—with an air of interest that ought to have impressed any ordinary waiter—some oysters and a soup and a grill, and that sort of thing, and then he felt relieved. He was still in that time of youth when a man thinks that he ought not to let the club waiters know that he cares little or nothing about the actual materials of his dinner.

Suddenly he heard a vigorous voice that he knew. At a table near to him two new-comers were sitting down. Looking up, he saw Mr. Waley and a man who was unknown to him—a youngish-looking man, with a pince-nez and a pale, handsome face. The moment he looked up, his eyes met the eyes of Mr. Waley, and found in them an instant and a gladsome recognition.

‘Now, I call this a most remarkable meeting!’ Mr. Waley

exclaimed, in his cheery way. 'You are the two chaps—the two men, I mean—that I most particularly wanted to bring together. And so here we are, don't you know. Mr. Conrad, I want to introduce to you my friend and fellow North-Country man, Sir Francis Rose.'

Sir Francis Rose! Jim had often heard the name in his earlier days. It was the name of a younger son of a great Northumbrian family, who had had a very stormy youth, and wandered through many countries, and was supposed to have been engaged in various extraordinary enterprises; and Jim had vaguely heard of late that the prodigal had returned to England, having, by an utterly unexpected series or succession of deaths, become the heir to the title and the estate.

If he had had time to think of the matter, Jim would have expected to see a man of Herculean proportions and dare-devil appearance. He saw, however, a slender man, not much above the middle height, with a pale, handsome face, and deep dark eyes, whose light was dimmed by a pince-nez, with close, delicate, decisive lips, opening to show white teeth; a man quietly but fashionably dressed; a man with a somewhat melancholy and outworn expression; a man apparently about forty years of age, or a little more, perhaps.

'How early he must have gone into life!' was almost the first thought that came into Jim's mind. 'Why, I used to hear of his extraordinary doings when I was only a child.'

All this passed through Jim's consciousness in a single flash of enlightenment.

The introduction was satisfactorily accomplished, and Sir Francis Rose and Jim Conrad shook hands.

'Now, look here,' Mr. Waley said, beaming with delight,

‘are you beginning dinner, or are you nearly through, as they say in America?’

‘I am only just beginning,’ Jim said, to whom alone the question could have been addressed.

‘Then, why shouldn’t we three dine together?’ Waley urged. ‘I have been particularly wanting you two to meet, and now, you see, Providence in its particularly kindly way arranges for the meeting.’

‘I shall be only too glad,’ Jim said frankly. ‘I was just sitting down to a lonely dinner, and I shall be delighted to have good company.’

‘I am sure it is only too kind of you, Mr. Conrad,’ Sir Francis Rose said, in a sweet clear voice. ‘I always felt sure I should meet you somewhere, and my friend Waley often talked to me of you. I am so glad that Waley and I are lucky enough to have the chance of dining with you so soon, and I am not sorry to say in this unexpected sort of way.’

Waley bustled about to give orders for the combination of the dinners. Jim noticed at a glance that the business of making arrangements fell to the part of Waley, although he did not understand that Waley was a member of the club, and he understood that Sir Francis Rose was. The waiters, having received Mr. Waley’s instructions, looked to Sir Francis, and Sir Francis simply nodded his assent. The arrangements were made, and the three were dining together. Jim had been thinking of a pint of claret for himself, but Mr. Waley had already commanded champagne all round.

‘I am glad to have the chance of making your acquaintance, Mr. Conrad,’ Sir Francis said, in his singularly sweet voice—a voice the tones of which seemed to caress the ear. ‘I am glad because you are a North-Country man like

myself—I know your name quite well, of course, and I know something about your family—and I am glad, too, because my friend Waley has been telling me about you.’

‘I am very much pleased to meet you, Sir Francis,’ Jim said. ‘I need hardly tell you that I have often heard your name up in the North-Country.’

‘And not mentioned with absolute commendation, I dare say,’ Sir Francis observed, with a quiet smile. ‘I know quite well that for a long time the sound of my name was a sound of fear to most of my friends, and I dare say to all of my family. People hadn’t got accustomed in those days to young men striking out a path for themselves, and became quite shocked if the country squire’s son was audacious enough to make money in a new way in a money-making world. Well, I have now become the country squire myself—but I am not quite certain whether I shall be able to settle down to country squiredom for the rest of my life.’

He spoke carelessly, as if it did not much matter either way.

‘Not while Albert Edward Waley is at your elbow to drive you along,’ his friend and admirer said with animation.

It was curious and interesting to note, as Jim thought, how Mr. Waley gazed upon his chief with eyes in which delight and admiration beamed, or rather blazed. Jim’s heart went out to Waley merely because of his undisguised devotion.

‘I don’t care,’ he said to himself, ‘what they have done or what they are doing; I like that poor chap because of his honest devotion to his chief.’

‘You were thinking of going abroad, Mr. Conrad? I mean, somewhere quite off the beaten track. So our friend Waley has been telling me lately.’

‘Yes. I want to go somewhere—for a time, at least,

I want to get fresh ideas—new material. I want to write books and things.'

'Something has gone wrong,' Rose said, with a melancholy and very sympathetic smile. 'Yes; I could see that in your face. Something goes wrong with most men, and drives them into adventure. It is good for them in the end. If something had not gone wrong with me when I was—well, yes, somewhere about your age, I should probably have remained in England and led a respectable life, and been unspeakably dull and bored—bored and boring. I could never have been the social outlaw of five continents.'

'I don't know that I have had any particular ambition in that way,' Jim answered smilingly. 'But I do want to knock about a little, and see other worlds than those I have seen already.'

'Take care,' Sir Francis said gravely. 'Remember, if you begin, you will probably have to go on. The thirst will come in drinking. I have almost always found that if you start by wanting novelties, you will finish by wanting novelties, and will die perhaps in trying to get them.'

'Well,' Jim answered composedly, 'a man can but dree his weird.'

'I don't think I know the meaning of that,' Waley interposed.

'It is not necessary that you should, my dear Waley,' Rose said, with the gentle tone of one who seeks to quieten a too questioning child. 'You don't want to know everything, do you, and to leave nothing to Mr. Conrad and me?'

'Oh, you both know a lot more than I do. But if it's anything improper——'

'Which it certainly is not,' said Jim.

'Probably if it was I should know something about it,' Mr. Waley said, in a contented sort of tone. 'I suppose

it's poetry of some sort, and I never could make anything of poetry. But I like a sensation.'

'He does, Mr. Conrad,' the chief observed. 'I never yet saw the sensational encounter or crisis of any kind that could put Albert Waley out.'

Waley smiled delightedly at this commendation.

'A man must be good for something,' he pleaded, in modest self-depreciation; 'and if I was to be easily frightened, why, then, don't you know, I shouldn't be good for anything in this world. Chaps like you and Mr. Conrad have lots to spare; but chaps like me haven't, and that's where it is.'

'Mr. Waley is a good deal of a philosopher,' Jim said. 'I saw that in him on our very first acquaintance.'

'What you see in him, you'll see in him to the end,' Sir Francis said.

'That's so,' Mr. Waley briefly affirmed.

He had picked up a good deal of American phraseology in America.

'I have not been to this club for a long time until lately,' Rose said. 'I used to be fond of it in my earlier London days. But of late I have not been so much about London, and, then, I fancy I should be a very unpopular personage at most of my clubs if I had the extreme unwisdom to go to any of them very often. Do you know that I used to be rather proud of saying, when I was younger, and more defiant of the world's laws, that I could get any candidate black-balled at any club I belonged to?'

'How could you do that?' Jim asked, somewhat simply.

'How, my dear boy? You are youthful, to be sure! Why, of course, by proposing or seconding him.'

Jim saw that he had missed a point, and allowed his languid friend to entrap him in a certain sense.

‘Yes, I was very unpopular then,’ Sir Francis went on; ‘and, do you know, I rather enjoyed it. Now I don’t—at least, I don’t think so. I am not young any more. I don’t quite know whether I would be young again if I could. But, anyhow, I am not young, and I don’t take the same joy in strife that I once did. Do you know that I have sometimes had, for all my friend Waley may say, an idea of settling down into the life of a quiet country squire, and seeing how that would suit me? If I really felt an inclination that way, I would follow it out whithersoever it might lead me.’

‘I shall never have the chance of trying it,’ said Jim; ‘and,’ he added decisively, ‘I don’t care.’

‘Well, I like your plucky way of looking at things. Don’t care is good enough for most affairs in life. I think I might say it has been my motto always. But, somehow, I should have thought you had more of what is called earnestness and principle—yes, principle—in you. I should have thought you would want to know what you ought to do.’

‘Yes; I should like to know what I ought to do,’ Jim said doggedly, as if he were maintaining some truth which, for the moment, he felt rather ashamed of admitting.

‘I thought so. Do you know that I feel inclined to envy you?’

‘To envy me? Yes? Why?’

‘Because I sometimes think it must be a relief to the mind to have that kind of moral compass to steer by. Yes, I have sometimes thought that. I never had any feeling of the kind myself. I always thought that it was quite as free to me to steer one course as another, and so I always followed my own fancy.’

‘Most men do, I am afraid,’ Jim said, not knowing exactly what he ought to say.

‘Yes, most men do, perhaps; but I am told that they have heart-struggles, and conscience-struggles, and all that sort of thing. Now, I have never felt anything of the kind—no, never once. I have made my own sensations and my own inclinations my guide, and have followed them wherever they chose to carry me, and they have carried me fairly well so far. I have knocked a great deal of enjoyment out of life. I have been in all manner of queer adventures and out-of-the-way places. Why, I remember when I was once caught and carried off by a lioness in South Africa.’

And he stopped, and began, apparently, to think it all over again.

‘Yes,’ Jim stimulated him, much interested, ‘a lioness in South Africa?’

‘Well, let me see—of course, that lioness in South Africa. Look here, she had for the moment frightened away some of my friends, and the lioness took me up in her mouth and trotted away with me as easily as a cat might carry off a mouse. Her jaws bit into me, and I soon fainted with pain and loss of blood; but as long as I had any consciousness left I only felt that I was going through a new sensation—that and nothing more, I do assure you. Please don’t think I am bragging about my courage. It wasn’t a question of courage. Many a man of ten times my courage in the face of danger would have felt quite differently.’

‘I think I understand,’ Jim said quietly.

He felt that he did understand.

‘You see, another man and a better man and a braver man might have thought nothing of that vulgar joy in mere novelty of sensation. It’s merely vulgar, I know it. While the lioness was carrying him off, the better and

braver man would have been thinking of his wife and his children away in England, and how they would feel when they read the completed story of his trip with the lioness, and he wouldn't have enjoyed the whole adventure. I had no children to think of, and not much else to think of at that time, and so I was able to appreciate the sensation. You have no idea how curiously it all felt.'

'I am sure I should have been horribly afraid,' said Jim, in the profoundest sincerity.

'No doubt you would—of course you would,' Rose replied placidly; 'any very young man would. You see, a young man has so much to live for, and so much to look forward to—so many lives to enjoy, in fact—and he naturally doesn't want to have all his prospects cut off by the bite of a villainous old cat of a lioness; but I had gone through the best part of my life, and had enjoyed all the familiar and what I may call the routine sensations, so I had a certain kind of enjoyment in the new sensation of being carried off by a lioness. Not that I was not very glad when I recovered my senses—for, as I told you, I fainted off quite soon—to find that I was among my friends again, and that I was alive, and it was the lioness who was dead. I was glad to live to have some other new sensations, even yet.'

'Well,' Jim said, 'you have plenty of time still before you for all manner of new sensations.'

'Ah, well, I am getting on in years, although I can't say that I feel the pull just yet. But the pull will come, and very soon, no doubt.'

'Then there will be the sensation of growing old,' Jim said, with a smile. 'That will be something new, and something, I hope, to be enjoyed—on your comprehensive principle.'

‘Ah, yes—the art of being a grandfather, as Victor Hugo describes it, that might count for something. But, then, I can’t be a grandfather, because I have not been a father.’

Jim suddenly remembered what Waley had told him about the chief’s unhappy marriage, and did not follow farther out on that branch of the conversation.

There was silence for a moment, and then Rose began again :

‘You are staying in town for some time, are you not, Mr. Conrad?’ he asked of Jim.

‘Oh yes, I am staying in town for some time, I think. I am not quite certain about my movements; but just at present nothing actually beckons me out of town.’

‘Ah, I see,’ Rose said, with his quiet smile.

Jim did not quite see what it was that Rose saw; but he did not think it necessary to make any inquiry, and so that matter, too, dropped.

Jim had got it into his mind that Sir Francis regarded him somehow as the victim of a love-lorn passion, and it is a curious thing how few young men care to be regarded in that sort of light. Young men in general may fan and feed on the disappointed passion all to themselves; but they do not want elder and more experienced men to spy it out at once and tacitly to condole with them upon it.

‘Well, I hope we shall meet often. I have an enterprise in my mind that may come to something, and if you want a change of scene, for any reason—for any reason—you can have a chance of it, if you will.’

‘Thanks,’ said Jim bluntly; ‘we shall meet again.’

‘We are sure to meet again,’ Rose said sweetly, and then the little company broke up.

Rose and his henchman went one way; Jim went another.

Jim was undoubtedly much impressed by his new acquaintance. He was in a manner fascinated by Sir Francis Rose. In the first instance, he was a good deal surprised. From all that he had vaguely heard, and even more vaguely remembered, of the Northumbrian wanderer, he had formed the idea of a man of commanding presence and self-asserting manner—a picture of what might be called a young lady's pirate, if young ladies cared anything about pirates in these days of introspection and problems of sex. Again, when he heard from Waley of his all-accomplished, all-commanding, unnamed chief, he had also made up his mind to the idea of some strong and strenuous figure. He smiled at his own absurdity.

'Surely,' he thought to himself, 'I might have known that a man is always the very opposite of what you expect him to be. The wild revolutionist of the platform is a meek, domestic little man in private, rather apt to be afraid of his wife. The advocate of peace at any price is a burly, dogmatic giant—and so on. I might have known. I am afraid I shall not very soon master the novel-writing trade, to which I am trying to apprentice myself.'

After all this surprise, however, came a certain distrust. Jim was inclined to shrink from the sort of fascination or mastery that even already Rose was beginning to exercise over him. There seemed something uncanny, if one might put it so, about his outworn melancholy, and his avowed craving for the perpetual stimulant of new sensation. Had he any scruples? Had he any principles? No doubt he had the ordinary code of honour which every man brought up as an English gentleman professes to adopt. He doubtless would not cheat at cards or at billiards. But he would probably without the smallest

reluctance or hesitation win the money of men who could not play as well as he could. Yes, but did not all men do that? Conrad asked himself. Sir Francis Rose had certainly taken some pains—if he were a man who could be said to take pains about anything—to impress him with the fact that everything he did was ‘done upon the square,’ as Mr. Waley would probably have put it, and assuredly no rumours had ever reached Jim’s ears at all to the discredit of the roving Northumbrian in that way.

Still, it was not all this which puzzled Jim so much as Sir Francis Rose himself, and his tone and his frank admission that he lived only for new sensations and surprises, and at the same time the kindly way in which he every now and then stopped to warn Jim against being led to follow his example. It was plain to Jim that Sir Francis felt a certain interest in him—perhaps a sort of local interest in him—but did not think him by any means a capture sufficiently important in the adventuring way to take any particular trouble about. He seemed to regard Jim as one might regard a bright and plucky schoolboy—and nothing more.

If Jim had been just a little more introspective, he might have come on the self-discovery that he was only made the more eager to share in one of Rose’s enterprises by the very warnings which Sir Francis gave to young men not to set their hearts too much on new sensations.

For, although he certainly felt fascinated in one sense, Jim felt a little irritated too. There was the immemorial irritation of the young man against the man who, not yet old or nearly old, seems to have had such a varied experience of life, and makes much of it, and blandly patronizes the younger man for whom all that is as yet only a possibility, and for whom, perhaps, it is never to come. Jim

was annoyed in a curious way at the superior sort of manner in which Sir Francis Rose seemed to take it on himself to assume what Jim's troubles were, and to suggest the best remedy for them. It was the manner of a man who wished to say:

'I have drained all life's sensations to the dregs, and you, poor youth! have hardly taken the first sip of them, and will never, I venture to think, drink anything like so deep down in the cup as I have done.'

Therefore Jim, as he walked home that night, was perhaps conscious, above all other things, of a desire to let Sir Francis Rose know that he, too, Jim Conrad of the Northumbrian Conrads, had an adventurous spirit and a daring heart, and that to him adventures would come easy. He was almost morbidly anxious to meet Sir Francis Rose again. As he walked homeward, his thoughts, however, began to arrange themselves in more artificial order.

'I might make copy out of it,' he said to himself. 'There might be the idea of a rattling good story got out of it, if he were to give me a chance of an adventure.'

So he beguiled his mind.

CHAPTER XIV.

'THAT LADY IS NOT NOW LIVING.'

THE livid, monotonous London winter had worn itself out, and spring was coming again. Jim Conrad continued to meet his two friends now and again at the Voyagers' Club. Rose talked incessantly about the scheme he had in preparation, and in which he proposed to enlist the services of Conrad. But Jim did not yet know in the least what

it was all about, and Sir Francis seemed to wish to convey to him each time the idea that the moment had not yet quite arrived when the seal of secrecy might be fairly broken. Jim waited without impatience. He would have been glad to get a chance of some stirring part to play which would take him out of England and out of his recollections, and might give him a hope of writing a rattling story, and so opening up a literary career. For he began to think of late that he had not the imaginative faculty which could construct a story all ‘out of his own head,’ as the children say. He began to fear that he had not even imagination enough to construct a story out of a text supplied to him. For look at the discovery of the cast-away ring! Surely there were men and women who, if set down to make a story out of that theme, as a teacher of painting puts his pupils to work each and all on one given subject, would each of them within a limited amount of time make a story which could solve the enigma in some striking and plausible way—each giving it a different interpretation, and each interpretation commending itself to a different order of mind.

But Jim had tried to make a story—any sort of intelligible and coherent story—out of the ring mystery, and had failed. ‘It is all to no purpose,’ he began to think. ‘I have no imagination—I have no invention. I must give up the whole idea of story-telling, or go and find some adventures that have simply to be written down and made to glow from first sight with their genuine surroundings and atmosphere. Perhaps I ought to give up the business altogether. But I will not give it up yet,’ he said to himself doggedly. ‘I do believe I have something in me—and, anyhow, it is about the only thing I have to live for.’ So he longed to be sent on some perilous expedi-

tion anywhere, and although he could not quite make out what Sir Francis Rose was doing in the expeditionary way, he was still most anxious to get a chance of proving that he could do something brave and clever.

One morning, as he was consuming his early tea and toast, he got a letter from Sir Francis Rose. It was dated from a flat in the near neighbourhood of Berkeley Square. Berkeley Square has of late been much invaded by the piles of red brick flats. Its aristocratic pretensions are rudely shadowed by these huge and aggressive structures—populous enough, or at all events trying to be populous enough for a city insula of Imperial Rome. Young as Conrad was, he could recollect a time when the builder's flat had not yet profaned the immediate neighbourhood of Berkeley Square. Even at that moment the thought crossed his mind—but he had other things of greater import to think about, and so he let it cross and go its way. He opened the letter, and found that it was a pressing invitation to come to luncheon that day—they two alone—to talk over a matter of some importance perhaps to both of them. Jim thought the matter over for a moment or two, then decided to go, and sent off a telegram to announce his acceptance of the invitation. Then he strolled along Piccadilly to St. James's Square, and he had a look in at the Voyagers' Club to read the papers.

There were not many men in the newspaper-room, and he had almost his 'pick and choose' of the papers. He took up the latest *Galignani*, and was turning it over rather apathetically, but still with a sort of idea that he might find something there about the movements of certain vanished friends of his, when his eyes rested on a paragraph which made his heart and his throat swell. It was this:

'DEATH OF A BENEFICENT ENGLISH LADY.

'Our readers will grieve with us to know of the death of that most generous and beneficent of Englishwomen, Mrs. Morefield, widow of the late Rochester Morefield, of Morefield Hall, Shrewsbury, and formerly of Morefield Lodge, South Kensington, London. The fame of Mrs. Morefield as a benefactress belongs not only to England, but to the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. On the Riviera, in Southern Italy, in Sicily, in Egypt, in Algeria, her philanthropic exertions were well known and thoroughly appreciated. She had given public parks to crowded neighbourhoods; she had founded colleges for the teaching of girls; she had provided playgrounds in quarters alive with poor children; and all she did with a quiet beneficence which shrank from making itself known. Mrs. Morefield had long been in delicate health—said to have arisen from lung-troubles and heart-troubles combined. She had for many years been compelled to pass her winters abroad. She was lately staying at a villa which she had taken just outside Algiers on the way to Birmandreis, when she was attacked by a sudden faintness, and expired almost without warning. Her daughter, Miss Gertrude Morefield, and a young lady, a close friend of the family, were with her when she died. It is assumed that Miss Morefield will be the sole heiress of her mother's great wealth.'

Jim put down the paper, and he could not help feeling as if he should like to shed tears. The news gave him a terrible shock, which was rather increased than made less by the formal stereotyped manner of the newspaper announcement. He had from the very first been greatly charmed by Mrs. Morefield. Her sweet and lucid nature

had a great attraction for him. He always thought he could see quite into her kindly, forbearing, and loving temperament. He had watched with a really tender interest her anxious care of her daughter—her fear lest her own ill-health and her enforced absences from London might become a weariness to Gertrude. He had observed how she watched for any indications of weariness or discontent on the part of Gertrude, as another anxious mother might look out for the warnings of insipient consumption on the cheek or the lips of her only daughter. He had noticed, too, the sort of sweet unconscious rivalry that seemed to be going on between mother and daughter; the struggle of the one to find out, the struggle of the other to conceal, any, even the faintest, suggestion of dissatisfaction with the mode of life which the health of the mother imposed upon them. In an early chapter of this story it has been said that on this kind of observation Conrad soon made up his mind as to the natures of the two sweet women, and every day and every hour he had spent with them only deepened his conviction. And now Gertrude was alone in life! Now she might go where she pleased—there was no longer any motive for that sweet and loving self-sacrifice! Oh, how well he knew that she would miss even that very self-sacrifice! How well he knew what a delight it was to her to make her mother believe that she cared nothing about London, and nothing about England or about home, lest the fond mother might reproach herself with being even the innocent cause of the daughter's frequent expatriation! His eyes were dimmed as he thought of that girl left alone—without the mother for whom she lived—in some picturesque, dreary, intolerable Moorish villa outside Algiers—dreary and intolérable in the shadow of that death, but hardly more dreary and

intolerable than any other place in all the world would be just now.

He knew she would not be alone—not all alone. Clelia would be with her. But, lover though he was, he could not bring himself to believe that the companionship even of Clelia would be as much to Gertrude as it would be to him. Still, it was a relief to know that Clelia would be with her—that Clelia would stay with her—that Clelia, having known misery herself, would understand how to succour the miserable. A keen pang of pain went through him as he remembered what things Clelia had said to him about Gertrude and about Gertrude’s care for him, and he had for a moment a wild thought of hurrying off to the southern shore of the Mediterranean, and taking Gertrude’s hand in his and telling her that some day he would try his best to make her happy again. Why should he not? Clelia could never be any more than his friend, and she had told him that she would be his friend none the less if he were to marry Gertrude. Why should he not? Alas! he could give no reason why, except that he had rendered up his heart to a woman who could not marry him, who could not and would not allow herself to love him.

Conrad was certainly not ungenerous or selfish. His love-troubles seemed for the moment of small account when compared with the bereavement of poor Gertrude Morefield. He remembered the kindness, sometimes almost motherly, with which Mrs. Morefield had always welcomed him. He remembered how lonely and unhappy he was when she and her daughter were cast, like sunlight, across his darkling way, and hot tears of gratitude and of grief came into his eyes. He read the paragraph in the paper over and over again, as if he could spell some sort of indirect consolation out of its journalistic English. Then

he remembered his engagement to luncheon, and he had a moment's thought of sending a wire to say he could not be there. 'But to what avail?' he asked himself. 'Had I not much better go through my common work of life as though nothing had happened? What good would it do to poor Gertrude Morefield, crying over the body of her dead mother, to know that I in London stayed away from a business luncheon? Will they, will either of them, write to me?' he wondered. 'Will they leave me to know nothing more of this than I have learned from the newspaper?' Just now, of course, he could not expect Miss Morefield to write; but would Clelia not write? Alas! there is much selfishness in love, be the lover as unselfish as mortal man can be. It did send a thrill of warm hope through Conrad's heart—the thought that Clelia might at such a time as that make up her mind to write to him and tell him everything, and ask him for his friendly counsel. Would they go, these two young women, alone, as Clelia had once predicted, out of the range of civilization—out into the social wilderness? Should he henceforth never more have sight or hearing of them—of either of them—of her—of her? He could not think it; he would not believe it.

'I shall see them again,' he said almost aloud. 'I shall see her again,' he whispered to his own heart.

Then he pulled himself together, and he took up his hat and went forth, determined to be to all appearance just the man he was before he opened the startling newspaper.

Whatever the speculations in which Sir Francis Rose was just now engaged, they certainly would not have appeared to be altogether unsuccessful in this their early stage of progress. The flat which Sir Francis Rose occupied was part of a house which stood at a corner of the

street, bulging and asserting itself into aggressive red-brick prominence. Furthermore, when Jim Conrad came to the door and got out of his cab, he found a man in livery standing on the steps—white marble steps—quite outside the threshold, and not at all waiting to open the door, who asked him if he was not Mr. Conrad come to see Sir Francis Rose. So Jim, not in a mood to be much abashed by this elaborate preparation, declared that his name was Conrad, and that he had come to see Sir Francis Rose. Then the outer man—the man in the uniform—rang the bell, and when the door was opened by the liveried menial, common to the whole building, he announced that this was Mr. James Conrad, come by appointment to see Sir Francis Rose. Whereupon Jim was consigned to another official, who was charged with the business of escorting him into the presence of Sir Francis Rose.

Jim might, perhaps, have been more impressed by all this arrangement if he had not gone into the club on his way, and seen the account of the death of Mrs. Morefield. As it was, he could hardly manage to fix his attention upon anything. He was ushered into the lift, although the whole of the dizzy height he had to scale was but that of two flights of broad, shallow marble stairs. He was then shown into Sir Francis Rose’s study, and received a warm greeting from Sir Francis Rose himself.

‘I am glad you are punctual,’ Rose said, glancing at the little clock that stood on the chimney-piece.

‘I think I am always punctual,’ Jim said.

‘We North-Country men are. It is in our blood, I fancy. A Southerner, especially a Londoner, never is punctual—he couldn’t be, even if he tried; and, of course, like a sensible man, he doesn’t try, knowing full well that

he can't do it. Men should never try to do what they know they can't do; it only bores them and their fellow-men. Don't you think so?'

'Well, I like to try to do things.'

'Ah, yes, because you can do them.'

A sweet silvery chime as of tiny bells was heard. It sank into the room; it tinkled on the tufted floor.

'That's for lunch,' Sir Francis said. 'I got that chime of tiny silver bells from one of the confiscated convents in Italy. I bought them for a mere trifle. I hate gongs and harsh noises of any kind. Come, let us have luncheon.'

With a wave of his hand he gracefully motioned Conrad towards the corridor, and then to the dining-room door. Nothing could be more exquisite than the quiet ornamentation of the room, and the look of the table, with its flowers, its fruits, its silver, its glass, and its china.

Jim had usually a good appetite, but to-day could not greatly enjoy his lunch.

'You have a capital cook, Sir Francis,' he said, for that very reason.

'I can't help wishing now and then,' Sir Francis said, with a tone of genuine yearning in his voice, 'that they would invent a new meat or two and a new wine or two. Curious, isn't it, that invention is limitless in every other way except in the matter of food and drink?'

'I find the old foods and drinks fairly good,' said Jim, with a smile. 'This fillet steak is excellent, and that frozen salmon seemed to me a dish fit for an emperor, and I don't find any fault with this very capital claret.'

'No?' Sir Francis said, with something like a sigh. 'I fancy, at least I hope, that these things I offer to you to eat and drink are fairly good in their way. But why can't we have something newer and more original?'

‘Why not rather stick to the whisky you’re used to?’ asked audacious Jim, quoting from a popular music-hall song.

‘Ah! but there it is. I hate getting used to anything; or perhaps, to put it more frankly and correctly, I ought to say that when I get used to a thing I begin to detest it. I get to hate the joints and the cutlets, and the steaks and the chops, and the salmon and the entrées, and all the rest. I am tired of sherry and claret, and Rhine wine and champagne and port. I want some new sort of drink—new and original, don’t you know, in its very idea. Can inventive science really do nothing, do you think?’

‘I am afraid I haven’t turned my attention resolutely that way,’ Jim answered. ‘The fact is, I don’t think I ever saw the wine that I couldn’t drink and enjoy, if I were in the mood for drinking at all.’

‘And all sorts of meats—beef and roast mutton, and that sort of thing; boiled beef and carrots?’

‘You should see me when I am a little hungry.’

‘Again you are to be envied,’ Sir Francis said, with once more something like a sigh. ‘I always crave for something new. I have tried horseflesh, of course, but there is nothing really new in that. You get as much used to it in a week as you do to boiled neck of mutton or any other utterly uninteresting and unpoetical abomination. And, do you know, I rather enjoyed myself during the siege of Paris. I was quite a young fellow at the time, as you may imagine, and I was with my father. He took it into his head to see the whole thing right through, and I was, of course, only too delighted. It seemed to me, as it would to most young men, the most charming thing in the world to be a besieged resident. But my poor father, although he stood out to the end

with all the pluck of a Northumbrian Rose, was terribly distressed by the food—the goats, and horses, and dogs, and cats and rats. Even then I quite enjoyed the novelty of the sensation—the dining off a cat and supping off a rat, and wondering what you could possibly get for breakfast and dinner the next day. But, of course, one was young then, and as we get on in life we grow corrupted, and we only like dinners when they are good.’

Jim suddenly awoke from a silence.

‘I hope you will excuse me, Sir Francis, if I seem a little out of sorts to-day. The truth is, that just before coming here I went into the club and took up a paper, and there I saw a scrap of news which very much distressed me.’

‘My dear boy, I am so sorry! Nothing serious in a personal way, I hope?’

‘No, not in that sense. The death of a dear friend.’

‘Oh!’ Sir Francis spoke in a tone of relief. ‘But who is dead? So much depends upon that. Not *she*, I fondly trust?’

‘Alas! There is no she, in that sense,’ Jim replied.

‘No, it is nothing of the sort. Only a dear old lady of whom I had come to be very fond.’

‘Well, well, old ladies must die, my dear Conrad, and I fancy your life will go on much the same. A near relation of yours?’

‘Oh no—merely a friend.’

‘Ah, yes; well, that’s all right—I mean, that is not so bad. You will soon get over that.’

‘Yes, I dare say; but there are other lives very dear to me that may not rally quite so soon.’

Jim was more than half conscious that, in thus giving way to sentimentality in the presence of Sir Francis Rose, he was making himself somewhat ridiculous. But he could

not help himself, somehow. His heart, according to the old saying, was in his mouth.

‘Other lives? Oh yes, was it *her* mother?’

‘My dear Sir Francis, as I have said already, there isn’t any *her* or *she*, or however you like to put it. But this dear old lady—and she wasn’t very old, either—who has just died was the mother of a great friend of mine, and the friend of another.’

There was a moment’s pause. Then Rose spoke in his low, clear voice:

‘I think you are to be envied, Conrad—to be envied, on the whole. I do indeed. I have been turning it over in my mind for this last minute or two, and I have come to the conclusion that you are really a man to be envied.’

‘I hadn’t thought it,’ Conrad said, rather depressedly. ‘It had not quite occurred to me. Would you mind telling me how and why I am a man to be envied?’

‘Well, if you ask me, this is my idea. The ordinary man is wholly wrapped up in himself. Nothing matters to him that does not concern himself. The misery of a whole continent is of no concern to him, if it does not happen to touch any interest of his own. You see?’

‘I don’t know that I do see. I don’t believe that it is so.’

‘You are still so young,’ Sir Francis said, with his very sweetest smile.

‘Still, I don’t quite see what your point is.’

‘My dear boy, I am making no point. I am only telling you that you are very much to be envied, so long as you can feel troubled about the concerns of other people.’

‘Yes, but that is what I don’t see,’ Jim said, almost sharply. ‘I fancy most people are sorry for the troubles of their neighbours. But suppose they are not generally,

why should a man be enviable who is? Is it not merely adding the troubles of others to his own?

‘My dear boy, not at all. Don’t you see that all through life—well, of course, you have not got very far through life—all one’s own affairs are more or less bound to go wrong? The more you succeed, the more you want to succeed. The higher you climb, the higher you pitch your standard of climbing. The more sensations you gratify, the more you want to gratify. Every blockhead of us is in his little way an Alexander, and the more worlds he conquers the more he wants to conquer. Now you see what I mean, don’t you?’

‘No, I can’t say that I do any clearer than before,’ Jim somewhat doggedly replied.

‘Not really? Well, I’ll explain. My idea is that a man’s heart and soul—or what we have agreed to call heart and soul—are as a common matter of fact bound up with his own affairs. Very well, then, I take it to be a common matter of fact also that a man’s affairs almost invariably go wrong with him.’

‘Oh, come now!’ Jim protested.

‘Yes, they do; yes, they do. You see, as I said before, the more success a man has, the more he wants to succeed, and what does that mean? Why, what can it mean but failure? You make three millions—you want to make five millions; you don’t make five millions. What is that but failure?’

‘Still, you have the three millions.’

‘I know; but you wanted the five, and you have failed; and there you are, the possessor of three millions, eating your heart out because you are not the possessor of five! Now, I have put this allegory of millions to you as the most practical and intelligible way in which I could express my ideas, but I may say that I do not myself so much care

about the millions themselves. I have tried for money, gambled for money, won money, lost money, made vast sums, spent vast sums, but I have not cared very much for money as money all the time.’

‘No? Then, what did you care for?’ Jim asked, with a somewhat languishing interest.

His heart was in the coffin there—not of Cæsar, but of poor, kind, sweet Mrs. Morefield, and he must have pause till it came back to him.

‘I cared for new sensation, my dear Conrad. I think nothing in life is real but sensation. I want to feel my blood dance racily through my veins. I don’t—honestly, I don’t—see anything else in life but that. Well, I haven’t asked you here to tell you all about myself, and my cravings after new sensations. My dear boy, I beg your pardon.’

‘No, no, don’t beg my pardon,’ Conrad said. ‘It was I who began the whole talk. And I was interested ever so much in what you were saying. But what I don’t understand, and what you haven’t quite explained, is why it should be an enviable thing for me that I should feel the troubles of other people added on to my own.’

‘No? Don’t you see?’

‘Not a blink.’

‘Well, well! How very odd! And you are a poetic and imaginative sort of young fellow! Don’t you see that if a man’s own affairs are bound always to go wrong—at least, to go comparatively wrong—it must be a great relief to him if he can have his attention drawn away for ever so little to the troubles of other people? That is the reason why I often envy the men who, like you, are so much more sympathetic and philanthropic, and all the rest of it, than I am myself. The troubles of others are some distraction to you. I am very much afraid that they are none at all to me.’

‘I am afraid,’ said Conrad somewhat wearily, ‘it is of no use arguing the matter over; and, anyhow, I am sorry I bothered you for a moment with my troubles, although I don’t believe one little bit that you are nearly as indifferent to the troubles of others as you make yourself out to be——’

‘Oh, well, if it came to helping people, and giving them a lift and all that, I don’t think I should be altogether wanting.’

‘No; I am sure you would not.’

‘But even then, do you know, I think it would be in great measure the virtue of the new sensation—or perhaps the relief of getting rid of them.’

‘Let it be what it will,’ Jim said somewhat more cheerily than before, ‘so long as the helping hand is given. But there, I don’t want to worry you with my personal or my indirect troubles any more. Indeed, I should never have said a word about them, but that I was afraid you might think I was down in the mouth—perhaps about something which I could not put into outspoken words. But, of course, I could not expect you to enter into my troubles. I don’t suppose you ever heard of the people whom the troubles have hit most nearly, and because of whom the troubles are a concern to me.’

‘Exactly—there it is,’ Sir Francis Rose remarked in the tone of one who thinks that the whole question may now fairly be allowed to drop. ‘When one does not know people personally, it is very hard to feel any interest in their troubles or their joys. You walk down to your club, and you see the bills of the evening papers, and you read in big letters: “Great Cyclone on the Malabar Coast—Loss of Five Thousand Lives”; “Hurricane in Madagascar—One Thousand Inhabitants Homeless”—and who cares

about all that? If one had ever seen or known any one of the fellows, he might, perhaps, care—although, to speak the honest truth, I don’t think the knowledge would do more than to give him a keener interest in the event, and therefore—in the frank, true sense—to make him the more glad that it had happened. Do you follow me?’

Jim shook his head. No; he had not been quite following him, in the sense of agreeing with him. But he had been listening to him with a certain awed curiosity. He felt that there was much ghastly truthfulness in what Sir Francis Rose was saying, and the admission that there was so much horrible inevitable truth mixed up with it only made it grate upon his nerves all the more.

‘These friends of yours—friends of the dead lady, I mean, whose troubles you make your troubles—were they men or women?’

‘Women,’ said Conrad—‘two young women; one the daughter I spoke of—or did I?—another her close friend.’

‘Yes. Well, I dare say I never heard the name of either of them.’

‘I don’t suppose you ever did.’

‘Then, don’t you see how hard it would be for me to be sorry for them? By any extreme of possibility, I could only be sorry for them because you were sorry for them; and on that principle our good friend Waley ought to be sorry for them because I was sorry for your being sorry for them, and our silent friend in Paris, Marmaduke Coffin, ought to be sorry for them because Waley was sorry for my being sorry for your being sorry for their being sorry. And so it goes on, like the ripple on the beach that is tossed off at Liverpool and goes on to New York, or breaks at San Francisco, and melts on the shore of one of the Sandwich Islands. My dear boy, that is not the sort of

sensation which, according to my idea of things, makes life worth living.'

'All right; let it pass,' Conrad said, with a certain feeling of self-reproach because he had inadvertently started the subject sacred to him, not knowing whither it was to lead, or, indeed, that it was to lead to anything. 'You were talking of some scheme you wished, or, I should say, were good enough to tell me of.'

'Yes, yes. Let us leave speculation, and go to business.'

CHAPTER XV.

'WILL YOU STAND IN WITH US?'

So they went back into Sir Francis Rose's study, and they settled down to talk about work. 'Leave speculation, and go to business,' were the words of Rose when they got up to quit the dining-room. But the business seemed to Jim Conrad to be speculation of the most daring kind. Rose expounded his plans in his sweet, thrilling, musical voice, and Conrad could not conceal from himself that it carried a witchery along with it. Jim could not help thinking that if the owner of such a voice cared to fascinate women there were but few women whom he might not fascinate. Nor could he keep down a sudden strange unmeaning wish that no woman he cared for, or might ever care for, should come within the spell of that voice.

But the plans—the business? Well, it was very much as Mr. Waley had described it, only that his was the merest sketch, and Sir Francis Rose filled in all the details and gave the thing life. The plan was a plan of discovery—a roving commission all over the world to find new fields and

works for the capitalist. Sir Francis in his enterprise went in for anything. He recognised that the civilized nations had wakened up again to all the old enthusiasm for exploring and adventure. The passion for new fields of enterprise and of gain had sprung up in the hearts of peoples who heretofore had felt no touch of such a fever. It had always burned more or less steadily, more or less fitfully, in the hearts of Englishmen and of Dutchmen. But now there was France—there was Italy—there was Germany—there were the United States—although, of course, the United States thus far had in general found ample scope and room in their own vast and varied domains. But the capitalist of the United States was quite willing to venture beyond his own borders when there was any chance of a way to make money. In old days, when a discoverer found out a new promise of wealth in some far-off region, he annexed it for his king or he sold it to his king. Now, the plan, as Sir Francis Rose pointed out in eloquent and glowing words, was to sell the discovery to a capitalist, or to a syndicate of capitalists, and let the capitalists annex it or exhaust it for themselves.

Sir Francis did not himself take much interest in the forming of companies. He preferred to allow other men to form the companies and take the responsibilities. He stipulated, of course, for a certain proportion of shares to begin with, and at the first profitable moment he sold the shares, got the money, and was free of the company's responsibilities. He became almost rapturous as he described the triumph of finding some new source of wealth for others, and of making some wealth out of it himself. Sir Francis dwelt especially on the safety of the enterprises. Jim felt a little puzzled. It seemed to him that the safety of an enterprise was not exactly the one element in the situation

which, according to his judgment, would be most likely to captivate Sir Francis. He even went so far as to hint something of this.

‘For me?’ Sir Francis said sweetly. ‘No, I must confess that for myself the dash of risk is pleasant in most cases. Who would care for the hunting-field if there were really no danger there? But I should be very sorry to draw any of my friends into dangerous situations. My friends may not care for new sensations quite as much as I do.’

‘Tell me, Sir Francis,’ Jim said, ‘two things.’

‘Will tell you anything, my dear Conrad.’

‘First, why did you think of asking me to take part in any of your enterprises; and next, what do you want me to do?’

‘I have the greatest pleasure in answering both your questions. Why did I ask you to join me in some of my enterprises? Really and truly, because Waley put the idea into my head.’

‘But what did Waley know about me?’

‘Waley took a liking to you—instinctively, I think—perhaps as you are both, like myself, men from the North-Country. He told me you were just the man he wanted—clever, bold, energetic, a North-Country man, and a man in trouble of some sort who would be glad to get into a new field of life. Do you know that Waley is my brains-carrier?’

‘I did not know; I should never have guessed it.’

‘Yes, but he is,’ Rose declared earnestly. ‘I only amuse myself and kill time, and all that, but Waley is in deep earnest about everything. Waley has all the gift of the divining-rod. I verily believe that if there were some new metal, or some new diamond, or some new force in industrial science to be found in Crim Tartary or the un-

trodden regions of Central Australia, Waley would have a vision in the night which would guide him to the very source of the discovery. Don't you make any mistake about it, my dear Conrad, Waley is the inspiration of all this work which I have taken up, and I am at best the ornamental expounder.'

'He does not seem to be very rich—Mr. Waley.'

'No,' and Sir Francis looked a little dashed; 'no, I admit that. We have not had quite time yet to amass a really considerable fortune. But that, I can tell you, is no fault of Waley's; it is rather a fault of mine—and of Fate. He would stick to a thing until it was fairly exhausted. I can't; that is not my way. I want something new. The moment we are well on with one thing I am inclined to say, "Now then—next." That, I suppose, is not exactly the way of permanent success.'

'No, it certainly does not seem like it to the unpractised mind.'

'But that is not Waley's fault. His one great fault is that he is too much devoted to me. I feel it often; I have told him so often. The worst of it is, the more frankly I tell him of it, the more and more he becomes devoted to me.'

Yes, Jim thought he could understand. The more the chief preached against too much devotion, the more the devotion became too much. Jim had for some time been forming a high opinion of the gallant soul of Mr. Waley.

'Then the second question,' Conrad reminded Rose. 'What do you want me to do?'

'Oh, to be sure—yes, I was forgetting. Well, we want you to go out prospecting somewhere—anywhere, but to some new place. Waley will find out the place and start you on your mission. Of course, it is not to be a mission

in our name; it is all your own chance or your own adventure, you see. But you will stand in with us. It must be some new place. Not South Africa, and not the familiar parts of South America. All these are rather played out, we think. And not diamonds; and certainly not rubies. We want to hit on something quite new.'

'But how on earth am I to find something quite new in some spot of the world quite new to me?'

'Leave all that to Waley. He will put you up to everything; he will look after your outfit and all that; he will give you inspiration. If you can get into a row with the natives of whatever the place is, all the better. The papers will then take the business up and boom it.'

'But suppose I were to get killed?' Jim asked, with a smile.

Sir Francis Rose looked up at him with quick and earnest eyes.

'My dear Conrad,' he said emphatically—and his voice thrilled musically into Conrad's ear—'I hope Waley has not for once made a mistake. He told me he was convinced, from what he had observed—and he is a very keen observer—that you were a young man who did not care three straws about life—I mean, for the mere sake of living.'

Was there ever a young man who would not be touched and roused by such a way of putting the matter?

Jim Conrad, a sensible fellow enough in ordinary affairs, saw himself at once as the hero of some ruined romance—as a man who cared nothing for life, and only courted the uttermost danger that might come in his path. His late disappointment in love—his great disappointment—blended naturally in with that thought, and he became in the moment the man to lead a forlorn hope—any forlorn.

hope. In youth no quality seems so fascinating, so honourable, so romantic, so heroic, as a readiness to throw one's life away.

‘Yes, I care little for life,’ Jim said, ‘if I can't have, or as I can't have, the things I set my heart on. Waley was right enough there.’

‘I was sure Waley would be right, and I am quite in sympathy with you, my dear Conrad. Life is a poor thing enough, even at the best; and at anything short of the best it is not worth having at all. I have always acted on that principle, and I find it saves one a vast amount of anxiety and of trouble and of terror. Well, then, we'll talk to Waley more definitely about all this, and hear what new ideas he has to give. You are with us, I take it?’

‘Well,’ Jim answered good-humouredly, ‘the basis of negotiations is found, as the diplomatists say.’

‘Yes, yes; I quite understand. I was a diplomatist myself for a short time. Did you know?’

‘Yes, I had heard.’

‘Of course you have heard. I was turned out of the service—at least, I was requested to find some other field for my talents. I couldn't help taking part in a revolution in Mexico—I thought the chance of a new sensation was far too good to be lost—and they didn't like my conduct at the Foreign Office; the men of routine and red tape could not stand it, and there was nothing for it. I had to go. I am very glad now that I had to go. Diplomacy is the most stupid work, unless when occasionally tempered by revolution. Well, well, excuse me for bringing in all this talk about myself. We shall see Waley tomorrow, and he will tell us exactly what he wants to have done, and where and how it is to be done.’

‘One question here, Sir Francis, before I go.’

‘As many questions as you like, my dear Conrad.’

‘Only one. What part does our silent friend, Marmaduke Coffin, play in all this business?’

Sir Francis smiled.

‘A very useful but a very humble part. Coffin is our general finder-out—not chucker-out; don’t confound two quite different functions—our general finder-out.’

‘I am afraid I don’t quite understand.’

‘Why, don’t you see? If you want anything found out, Coffin is the man to find it out for you. He has the instinct of a sleuth-hound himself for running in the trail of a scent. Nobody knows or cares about him, and he tries to know all about everybody. I don’t believe there is anything he couldn’t find out if only you gave him a little time. He is to be trusted absolutely. I think he is bound to me partly, as Waley is, because we are all North-Country men.’

‘He doesn’t seem to make much money out of the business,’ Jim could not help remarking.

‘No; he has not made much money yet, but he is in hopes of getting something out of the business some time. He has an ambition in life.’

‘Yes, and that is?’

‘Don’t know, I’m sure; perhaps to settle some son or daughter in life.’

‘He has a son or a daughter?’

‘My dear fellow, I don’t know—never asked. We don’t ask questions of each other.’

‘Has he a wife?’

‘In a manner, yes; that I do know—he told me. She lives here in London. She was a bad lot, I believe, and led him a devil of a life, and he went away and settled in

Paris. I hope to do something for him some day. In the meantime, I could trust him with my life; and do you know, Conrad, I am quite sure he would kill a man without asking a question if I wanted a man killed and were to tell him to do it.’

‘He seemed to me a man of extraordinary self-control and determination,’ Conrad said; ‘but I hope his energy will never be taxed in that particular sort of way.’

‘Oh, no, no! what nonsense—what nonsense!’ Sir Francis said with a musical laugh. ‘We have nothing to do with killing. It is not in our line one little bit. Mine was only a hasty illustration. We are for making, and not marring; we want to make our own fortunes, and are not unwilling to that end to help other people to make their fortunes too. I think we make a capital triumvirate—Waley, Coffin and I. Waley is the inspiration; I am the working manager. Coffin presides over the intelligence department.’

‘How did you all come together?’

‘Well, you see, to begin with, we were all young together, on my good old grandfather’s estate. And then there is something which draws men together however different they may be in fortune and position and inclinations, and all the rest of it, and makes them comrades whether they will or no. Don’t you think there is something in that?’

‘Yes, indeed, I am sure there is—a great deal in that more than we can yet understand.’

‘I am sure of it,’ Sir Francis Rose said, with an air of composed conviction. ‘I dare say Science will tell us something some day—when Science condescends to concern herself a little more with human beings and a little less with dogma—about that, curious, unexplained, but

very certain attraction of some men towards some other men.'

Perhaps in his secret mind Conrad was just then inclined rather to study the curious, unexplained, but perfectly certain attraction of some particular man to some particular woman, and some particular woman to some particular man. But he accepted in good faith the theory of Sir Francis Rose, and was willing to wait until Science should work it all out and make its springs quite clear.

'Well, that is how we have drifted together, we three,' Sir Francis said, as if the whole thing was thereby quite settled and done with. 'Of course, there are many more hands to the work, but we three hold the strings of the management in our grip. I suppose the same law of attraction led Waley to you, and me to you through Waley. Anyhow, I feel as if I had known you all my life, and I should without a moment's hesitation trust my life to you.'

Jim was touched.

'You might—it would be safe,' he said quietly.

'Of course, I know it. By the way, talking of secrets, I should say that Waley and Coffin and myself are bound together by a common misfortune from which you as yet are wholly exempt; and will be, I trust, for all your life, although I only piously trust it.'

'Yes; what is that? Do, please, give me warning in time.'

'Not the least use, my dear Conrad, in giving you or any other man a warning as to that particular rock ahead. If he is going to run upon it, he will run upon it, cry out who may.'

'But what is it?'

'Can't you guess? Ah, well, you are very young. We

all made a sad mistake; we each married the wrong woman.’

Conrad could hardly help laughing at this blunt declaration, given out as it was in a tone of absolute resignation. He tried to be very grave as he said :

‘I am sorry to hear that.’

‘Yes, I knew you would be. It fell out in different ways. I married a woman who was much too good for me, and she bored me to death, and I couldn’t stand her. Waley married a woman who was not half good enough for him, and she bored him, and she could not stand him. Coffin married a woman who was not good enough for anyone, and he began to make up his mind that if he were to stay too long with her he would certainly lose his head some day and kill her—and so, as I told you, he took his flight, and he settled in Paris. But he would come over here if ever we wanted him, at any risk—even at the risk of meeting his wife.’

‘And having to kill her?’ Conrad asked.

‘Oh no; not the slightest necessity for that now. He does not live with her any more, and he has his life all to himself.’

‘It seems a sad story,’ Jim said.

‘Coffin’s? Yes, oh yes! But don’t you think they all are sad stories?’

‘I suppose so,’ Jim said doubtfully, thinking to himself a wife too good for a man was a burden that any man might be willing to endure.

‘Well, anyhow, that is not to our present purpose, and I don’t quite know why I gave you all these private histories. I suppose because of that mysterious law of attraction about which we have just been talking. So be it. The immediate question is, are you inclined to stand in with us?’

‘I am inclined—yes. But before giving a definite answer, I should first like to have a talk with Waley and find out exactly what he wants me to do. Until I know that, I could hardly give you an answer, Sir Francis. I know my own capacity pretty well, and Waley does not. I know what I should be able to do. If he wanted a hair of the Soldan’s beard or a blast of Oberon’s horn, I am sure I could not get either for him.’

‘No, and I am afraid Waley would not care much about them even if you did. Very well, you shall see Waley to-morrow; I shall wire to him to call on you—and will you see me the day after—here?’

‘Yes, certainly. At what hour?’

‘Oh, let me see—come to luncheon if you don’t mind. We both must have luncheon somewhere, and it saves time to have it together and talk over matters of business.’

‘So it does. I shall come. Have you business offices in the City?’

‘My dear Conrad,’ Sir Francis exclaimed, in a tone of some astonishment, ‘nothing of the kind! We are not a limited company, or a company of any kind. We are a comradeship of enterprising gentlemen, who desire to develop wherever they can the world’s resources, of any kind and in every direction, and to make money for ourselves out of the fruits of our genius—shall I call it?—and our energy. That’s quite a different sort of thing, can’t you see, Conrad, from a company with a board of directors, and preference shares, and meetings of shareholders, and hostile resolutions, and all that inconvenient bother!’

‘Yes, I see that it is different, and I suppose I shall come to understand not only the difference, but the reasons for the difference, in good time.’

‘Of course you shall. You shall understand all about it.’

‘Well, meantime, I think we quite understand each other, Sir Francis,’ Jim said warmly, for he was a little touched at the outspoken candour which had taken him so far into an unsought confidence. ‘I’ll talk over matters with Waley to-morrow, and I shall be with you here the day after.’

‘Thanks, ever so much. That is all that I could possibly expect. Good-bye, my dear fellow.’

‘Good-bye.’

So they shook hands and parted. Jim Conrad went down the staircase—he did not trouble about the lift—with a mind which wonder and puzzlement had filled. What did Sir Francis Rose and Waley want of him in this curious companionship? What was the companionship? Was it a reality at all? Had it any form and purpose and system? It was clear that he had not to do with three maniacs. Rose seemed alive with cleverness and vivacity and shrewdness, and, besides, Rose was now a man of fortune, and was under no necessity for mixing himself up in wild speculations. Mr. Waley seemed the very embodiment of health and manly strength and water-tight sanity. The soundness or the madness of Marmaduke Coffin would not have been of much account in any case. Rose had clearly defined Coffin’s business in the comradeship as that of the finder-out, and a man with only half his senses about him might be a perfect genius at the work of finding out.

The whole thing seemed to Jim attractive, romantic, highly fascinating. It flattered his youthful self-esteem to have been taken into such full confidence, and to have been treated as a young man who was not afraid to go

into danger, and might be trusted to make his way out of it. Undoubtedly there was an indescribable attraction for him in the voice and the manners and the winning, confidential ways of Sir Francis Rose, and yet there seemed something subtle and dangerous in them, too. He put all further thought away, and determined to wait for a decision until he should have talked with Waley.

CHAPTER XVI.

A LETTER AND A MEETING.

CONRAD had a long talk with Waley the next day, and the result was that he determined to stand in, as Rose had put it, with the enterprises of the Dauntless Three. He satisfied himself, he thought, that there was nothing about the undertakings which was not honourable and straightforward, although there was a good deal of personal risk, and even of recklessness. It was, in fact, an unsystematized Company of Founders, who had to look all over the world for new developments and new opportunities of foundation. Waley's designs were sometimes stupendous in their vastness, and sometimes almost grovelling in their pigmy proportions. The first dream of his life was to find the substitute for coal—the cheap and ready substitute for coal as a house-warmer and an engine-driver.

‘The man who can get at that, my dear Conrad,’ he confidentially said, ‘will make the biggest fortune ever made in this world. And it is bound to come, I tell you. Somebody will find it soon, and why should not you and I manage somehow to get hold of it? You think it over of nights. I keep awake a good deal thinking it over, but I haven't tumbled on to it yet.’

That was a grand scheme, a heaven-scaling scheme. But Waley was not always Titanic.

‘There’s a neat little fortune, a snug little fortune,’ he said to Conrad, lowering his tone, perhaps as if he thought somebody might be listening to this minor proposal who could not possibly think of rising to the grander thought, and also, perhaps, as if a lowered tone of voice were better suited to a lowered tone of enterprise—‘there’s a neat little fortune to be made by the man who invents a substitute for ink. Think of it, dear boy! Half a moment now’—and the right thumb met the upper joint of the right forefinger. ‘Just think of it half a moment. Think of a pencil which can write as darkly as ink—whether it be black, blue, red, violet, or whatever you will—and will be as indelible as ink. Think of the total abolition of the ink-bottle and the pen—the pen that corrodes in the ink—the ink that blots the fingers, the ink that upsets and ruins your desk, and the fountain-pens that shed their black life-blood into your waistcoat-pocket! Half a moment, Mr. Conrad—think of all that! It must be within the resources of the chemical world to create a substance which will make such a pencil; or there is such a substance deep in the earth or lying on the surface in some part of the world, only waiting for the man of genius to recognise it and carry it away and put it to its use. Half a moment, Mr. Conrad—why should you not be that man?’

Conrad only shook his head at the suggestion. He feared he should not recognise the substance even if he were to come across it, and as to inventing some chemical compound to serve the same object, he regarded such an achievement as utterly beyond the range of his intellect.

‘Well, we must send you somewhere,’ Mr. Waley ob-

served cheerily. 'It would be hard if we could not find some place where your pluck and your ideas would come in handy. You want to go pretty far away, don't you?'

'The farther the better.'

'Right you are. That's just what I should have said myself at your age. Of course, as one begins to get a little on in life, one isn't so wildly anxious for far foreign travel. We might begin with something easy. Now, there's Patagonia. I'm told there's a lot to be found in Patagonia.'

'A lot of what?'

'Oh, I don't know; a lot of all sorts of things, if one only went out and kept his eyes peeled, as they say in America. How would Patagonia suit you?'

'Patagonia,' said Jim with the utmost gravity, 'would suit me nicely.'

In truth, Patagonia would have suited him then just as well as any other distant place. So long as he got clear of London and of Paris, he did not care much whither Fate might take him. And it would go hard if the makings of a new and stirring romance were not to be found somehow in Patagonia.

Perhaps he might make some wonderful discoveries there—who knows? And his mind went back humorously to the saying about Goldsmith and the wheelbarrow.

'I may find something entirely new and precious,' he said to himself, 'in the Patagonian form of wheelbarrow.'

We need not go deeper into the Patagonian enterprise, because, as the course of this story will soon make it clear, Jim Conrad never had any opportunity of undertaking it. But it had some influence on his fortunes in the fact that it made him agree to stand in with the triumvirate in their schemes, that it gave him a new interest in life, and

that it beguiled his thoughts away from too frequent contemplation of himself and his heart-troubles.

He saw a great deal of Sir Francis Rose, and he could but feel sometimes with a sort of shudder that the fascination of the man was growing upon him. Of Waley he began to think better and better every day, although he often allowed himself a quiet smile at Waley's multitudinous projects.

At one time he used to wonder how a man of Sir Francis Rose's refinement could be content with the companionship of a man like Waley. Now, when he began at ominous moments to find a shiver of distrust going through him as to Rose, he suddenly pulled himself up and satisfied himself with the assurance that a man who was trusted by Waley must be thoroughly worthy of trust. For he had come fully to believe in Waley as a gallant and a generous spirit, a chivalric, unselfish, and exalted Sancho Panza, although he could see little of the Quixote in Rose.

So the days passed pleasantly enough for Conrad—in a way. He began to regard all his past mode of life as done with, and about to be wholly blotted out in enterprise quite new to him. That, he said to himself, was the best thing that could happen to him. He wanted to get away as soon as might be to Patagonia or elsewhere. If he were to meet Clelia Vine again, he did not feel quite sure whether all his longing for self-exile would resist one softening, kindly glance from her eyes. And to what avail staying in London or anywhere to be near her? He could never be near her in the true sense. She was a married woman—she could not love him. He was beginning to think now that she had never really cared for him at all. He was beginning to doubt whether even in the beaten way of friendship she had ever cared much about him. For, why

did she never write? Why did she tell him nothing about the changed existence of herself and Gertrude Morefield? If she had gone with Gertrude, as she once spoke of going, out of the reach of civilization, why not one kindly, friendly parting word—'tis said, man, and farewell! No; not even that parting phrase of Mark Antony to his devoted follower, that phrase compressing into its merest formality so much of friendship and regret, and pity and pathos: nothing of that kind had reached him from her—from the woman who had told him she would have loved him if she could have loved him without shame.

Every day, every hour of every day, he kept expecting to hear from her. His first thought every morning as he awoke was: 'Has a letter come from her?' Every knock of the postman made his heart almost to stand still in a pause of agonized expectation until the little tray of letters had been put into his hand, and he saw that there was none from her. Every night when he returned from dinner-party or theatre, and when he took his lonely candle, pale-burning like a Welsh corpse-candle, into his little sitting-room, his heart stood still again until he had mastered his emotion and reached the table, and found that among the letters brought by the last post there was none for him from her.

The postman ought to be a thoughtful and melancholy creature. He must surely, if he has any faculty of thinking at all, be able to understand that not one letter in every thousand he carries can bring satisfaction to him or her who receives it. He must know that every bundle of letters he delivers at any given door fails to contain at least one letter which somebody in the house is yearning for, and which, if it came, would mean to that somebody the whole contents of the delivery. To be a contented postman one

ought to be a misanthrope. For out of every package of letters delivered at any house the majority are assuredly wearisome and disagreeable to receive, and the whole lot are to somebody detestable because they do not contain the one particular letter for which the heart of that somebody yearns, pines, and bleeds.

Jim Conrad sometimes felt like this, and turned this over in his mind as day after day, and night after night, he longed and looked for a letter from Clelia Vine, and no letter came. One night at last his good luck found him.

He was dining at the Voyagers' Club with Rose, they two alone. They were fast comrades now, and they had gone to a theatre, and had seen pretty dancing, which the elder man enjoyed with a quite youthful delight, and on which Conrad, his mind perturbed and distracted with other thoughts, found it hardly possible to keep his attention fixed. Then they went back to the Voyagers' Club for a cigar and a whisky-and-soda.

'When shall I see you to-morrow?' Sir Francis asked, as the time was coming for breaking off the sitting.

'Whenever you like.'

'Well, you may as well come to luncheon. Then I have to drive about to a lot of places—only shops and business things—and if you have nothing to do we might go about together, and we can talk all the time.'

'All right; that will suit me admirably.'

'Then, that's settled. I say, my dear Conrad, I shall miss you when you go away.'

'Away, where?'

'Well, to Patagonia, I suppose.'

'Oh yes, of course, to Patagonia. I was forgetting for a moment—I mean, for the moment.'

'Cool young customer!' Rose said with a smile. 'It is

nothing, apparently, to you to be sent packing off to Patagonia.'

'Patagonia or any other place is much the same to me.'

'And yet you are fond of London?'

'Yes, I am very fond of London, while I am in London; but just now I don't care how soon I get out of London.'

'Ah, yes, I understand,' Sir Francis said, with a quiet and sympathetic smile; 'the old heart-trouble, of which I know nothing, and of which, my dear Conrad, I don't want to know anything, unless at any time you might like to tell me something about it. I have had some heart-troubles myself in my day.'

'I don't know that I have much to tell,' Conrad said not uncheerfully; 'I suppose I am very much like everybody else in that way.'

'In life, my dear Conrad, nobody's trouble is quite like the trouble of anybody else. I have learned that these long years. You will learn it some time.'

They were now standing at the door of the club. Rose hailed a hansom.

'Good-night,' he cried. 'Don't forget luncheon to-morrow.'

Conrad walked home. He found his faithful candle waiting for him on the hall table; he lighted it, and went mechanically upstairs.

When he got into his sitting-room, he could just see, by the pinched and flickering light of his candle, that a letter for him—only one—was lying on his table, and even by the light of that unsatisfactory candle he saw that the writing on the envelope was the writing of Clelia Vine.

'We have arrived in London, but we have not yet positively settled anywhere, and may change our ground

to-morrow. I will let you know to-morrow evening where we are to be found. Our further movements are all quite uncertain. We came here through Spain to avoid France. Gertrude has suffered much, though she won't admit it, and bears bravely up. When you see us, don't say anything about her trouble. If she wishes to speak to you about it, you had better leave her to do so. You have been thinking of us, I know, and we have been thinking of you.

‘CLELIA.

‘I ought to have written to you before, but I couldn't; I hadn't the heart.’

That was all; but it was a great deal for Conrad. He put the letter to his lips; then he went downstairs again, carrying his candle, which he put on the hall table, and there he extinguished it, and then he wandered out into the night, for he felt that he could not sleep for some hours yet. It was not long after midnight, and the night was divine in moonlight.

Conrad loved a long, lonely tramp at night through silencing London. He loved such a tramp at all times, but especially at night, when anything had fast, deep hold upon his mind and his heart. He wandered on, hardly knowing whither he was going. He passed along Piccadilly, he turned into Grosvenor Place, and he made for the nearer end of the Chelsea Embankment. A vague thought took him that he should like to see that moon shining on the river.

Before he reached the Embankment, or even the old Chelsea Hospital, with its clock-face shining a pale yellow against the silver of the moonlight, he came upon a dull little street, which he had often passed through in the daytime. It was a street made up for the most part of

mean little dwellings and two or three small stables. There were two or three laundries there, and one or two public-houses; there was a shop for the sale of stuffed birds. So far as these were concerned, nothing could well be less attractive or picturesque; but there was an attraction which had often drawn Jim Conrad that way.

At the farther end of the street, as he was now entering it, and on his right-hand side, there stood an old ivy-covered church within a walled and railed enclosure of its own. The church had a square tower with battlements, like the keep of an old Norman castle; it had oblong windows, narrow and curiously suggestive of defence in time of civil trouble.

Conrad knew nothing about the church—did not even know its name; he had never troubled to find out, although he might have found out by simply crossing the street and reading the announcements of sermons and services and church social entertainments which were placarded, in print and white paper, on a two-legged, splay-footed notice-board which stood on the grass within the enclosure, but he had never had the curiosity to look. What had always fascinated him was the church itself, with its strange, old-world, militant sort of look, the church standing proud and lonely there among those petty shops and mean little houses, and frowzy women huddled at doorsteps, and dirty children enjoying themselves with skipping ropes and tip-cat, and waltzing on the pavement to the hideous discord of a barrel-organ. But now, this night, there was no nerve-disturbing barrel-organ; there were no uncombed and blatant women; there were no children with skipping-ropes or other instruments of torture. All was peaceful, all was still, as if it were fair Melrose by moonlight, and only the stately, battlemented,

ivy-clad church remained. The moon flooded it with light, and Conrad gazed at it in a curious sort of rapture.

What on earth had it to do with Jim Conrad? How could an old church in a London slum help him on through the troubles of his life? He could not tell. The wisest man that ever lived could not tell—could not have told.

All Conrad knew was that he had been inspired—no, not merely inspired, but actually driven, to look on that stately old church by Clelia Vine's letter, and that he could not help himself. That is just as good an explanation as can be given for many, not to say most, of the mysterious impulses of our lives. Nor could Jim Conrad tell then, or now, why, after having looked on that battle-mented church, he should forthwith stride off to the flat in the immediate neighbourhood of Berkeley Square and look up at the windows, and observe, with a certain interest, that the lights in Sir Francis Rose's rooms burned brightly still, at two hours after midnight. Jim did not stop to ask himself what possible connection there was between Clelia Vine's letter and the Chelsea church, between the Chelsea church and Sir Francis Rose's lodgings.

Jim was punctual at luncheon the next day—that day, it should rather be said—for he had not gone to bed before the new day had fairly settled itself down upon the world. Sir Francis and he talked over many schemes and projects.

'You sat up late last night,' said Jim, during a pause in the discussion of practical or visionary schemes.

'So I did,' said Rose; 'I often do. But how did you know—about last night, I mean?'

'Well, I happened to pass under your windows, and I saw that your lights were burning.'

‘Yes, yes; you were at some festive gathering in this quarter, no doubt?’

‘No, indeed; I had been wandering on the fringe of the Chelsea region. I had been looking at a very picturesque old church that I have taken a fancy to in a slum near the old Chelsea Hospital.’

Sir Francis Rose looked up with puckered brows and a curious appearance about him, as of one who gets a dim suspicion that some trap is being laid for him.

‘What is your church?’ he asked, in a hoarse, embarrassed voice—a voice which had lost in a moment all its music; ‘whereabouts is it? What do you know about it?’

‘About it? Oh, I know absolutely nothing. Only it has caught my fancy, and I go and see it every now and then.’

‘But you haven’t told me what church it is or where it is.’

Jim looked up a little disconcerted. He had not expected to find his innocent little narrative excite so much keen interest.

‘Oh, it’s only a church in a little street call Pagan’s Row, not far from the old Hospital.’

‘The church in Pagan’s Row?’ Sir Francis Rose asked, still turning his puckered eyebrows on to Jim’s face. ‘What do you know about it—have you any association with it—have you heard anything about it?’

‘I don’t know anything about it,’ Jim said, rather curtly. ‘Do you?’

‘Yes, I do! Yes, my dear Conrad, I do. But it doesn’t matter in the least. It is only an odd sort of coincidence that you should have been there last night, and have come straight away here.’

‘I don’t know anything about any coincidence in the

matter,' Jim said, 'and I don't know why I put you to the trouble of hearing anything at all about my utterly unimportant midnight wanderings.'

'London is full of coincidences,' Rose observed gravely.

'All right,' Jim replied; 'let them coincide.'

For he was still a little annoyed at the way in which his passing reference to his harmless midnight wanderings had been taken by his chief.

After a while a hansom was called, and the two drove out together. Sir Francis Rose seemed by this time to have forgotten all about the church in Chelsea, and the coincidence, whatever it was. They called at the bookshop in Berkeley Square, and at the Berkeley Hotel, and other places.

It was a beautiful day of the earlier spring. It was one of those rare days which make the more picturesque quarters of London look romantic and enchanting. Jim Conrad drank in the very life and rapture of the hour. The letter he had received had filled him with a strange sense of hopefulness. The letter and the weather seemed to be part of the one spell.

'I'll not go in,' Jim said, as they stopped at an engraver's in Piccadilly; 'I'll wait here for you.'

He did not want to bury himself even for five minutes in a dull back-room of a shop.

'All right,' said Rose carelessly; 'I shan't keep you very long.'

Jim looked along Piccadilly eastward. He felt somehow uplifted to a mood of enchantment. It was the letter, no doubt. He glanced into the shop as if to make sure that Rose was not present to see anything that might be going to happen. He could not tell why, but he felt as if he could not always trust himself in an over-wrought emotional

mood with Rose. Rose had lived through and lived down all moods, Jim thought. In which thought, of course, he was utterly wrong; but the talk of exhausted worldly experience in which Rose so often indulged had quite taken in the younger man, and made him believe that Rose had lived down, had outlived, all human emotion. Rose would have been greatly pleased to hear that he had succeeded in producing such an impression on his young friend.

And then Conrad looked up again, and the whole street, the whole scene, was blotted out for him, and he saw nothing but two great melancholy eyes looking fixedly at him. And then he jumped out of his cab. An open carriage had stopped beside him on the pavement, and he saw Clelia Vine, and afterwards—when his eyes lent themselves to other realities—he saw Gertrude Morefield. Both women were in mourning. Gertrude was looking thin and wasted.

Jim took the hand of each girl in his. For some occult reason, wholly unexplained in his own mind, he called them 'Gertrude' and 'Clelia.' Probably he thought it was a way of showing his sympathy.

'You got my letter?' Clelia asked, and she gave him a meaning glance, which told him that the talk must soon be over.

'Yes; but it gave me no address.'

'We were too unsettled as to our doings. Now we have found a place. We have not a moment to spare. Good-bye!'

'But I shall hear from you?'

'Oh yes, of course,' she answered, with a sweet smile and a tint of blush. 'I shall send you our address this evening. You must come and see us as soon as you can. Gertrude wants to see you, and so do I.'

'Do you stay long in town?'

‘You shall know all when I see you. Now good-bye.’

She held out her hand; he pressed it, and then took Gertrude’s half-extended hand. He found no pressure in that. Gertrude had not spoken one word.

The carriage was just driving away as Sir Francis was coming out of the shop. He stared at the ladies; neither of them looked at him. His eyebrows contracted. He set his lips closely together. He was evidently trying to keep down or conceal the effect of a sudden surprise.

‘What is the matter?’ Jim asked, in no little astonishment. He had never seen Rose under the influence of surprise—had not supposed that there was anything on earth that could surprise him. But Jim was destined in that matter to be a little surprised himself.

‘I don’t know what is the matter with you, Conrad,’ Sir Francis said, in a peevish tone. ‘You have nothing about you to-day but coincidences. First you start the church in Pagan’s Row, and then——’

‘And then?’ Jim asked. ‘What’s the “and then,” and what’s the matter with the church in Pagan’s Row?’

‘Well, but, I say, these confounded coincidences rather pitch a man off his balance. Who were the ladies you were just now speaking to?’

‘Is there any coincidence in that?’ Jim asked, almost angrily. He did not by any means like the new manner of his friend, and was much inclined for the moment to stop the cab, get out, and leave Sir Francis Rose to the enjoyment of his own humours.

Sir Francis evidently began to think that he had lost his head rather too much. He pulled himself together with a laugh, and said :

‘My dear Conrad, I must really apologize for my bad temper, and beg you to excuse me. The truth is, that I

fancied I recognised one of the ladies in the carriage, and my mind had been turned in the direction of the lady I supposed I had known by your confounded allusion to the church in Pagan's Row. Dear boy, I was secretly married in that church! I was only too anxious to forget all about it, but, you see, you wouldn't let me.'

'How on earth could I know?'

'Why, of course, my dear, good friend, you could not possibly know. But in some of my moods I am a mere bundle of nerves, and the allusion to the church in Pagan's Row, followed up by my fancied recognition of one of the ladies you were speaking to, was too much for me—bowled me over, in fact. Do forgive me if I seemed rude or petulant. I didn't mean to be anything of the kind, I do assure you.'

'All right,' Jim answered cheerily. 'It doesn't matter in the least. The ladies I was talking to are the girls of whom I told you; one of them has lost her mother.'

'Ah! I did not so much notice her.'

'But how do you know which was which, as you don't, I fancy, know either of them?'

'Well, I take it that the one in the deepest mourning was the daughter of the dead mother.'

'You seem to have looked at them pretty closely,' Jim said, with a somewhat questioning smile.

'One takes in a good deal at a glance, when it has been his habit to train himself to observation,' Sir Francis replied, now once again completely master of his voice and of himself.

'Whom did you suppose the other lady to have been?' Jim asked, with a sudden, shuddery sort of feeling passing through him.

'My dear boy, I thought—if you will have it—that she was my wife!'

CHAPTER XVII.

AN EPOCH-MAKING DAY.

‘THAT she was my wife !’

That she was the wife of Sir Francis Rose ! That Clelia Vine was not Clelia Vine any longer, but a sort of mysterious, unacknowledged, disallowed Lady Rose, cut poor Jim quite to the heart. Yet he could not but believe that at last he knew the truth. For the moment his whole mind seemed to be set upon no purpose beyond the effort to make it appear that he knew nothing at all about the matter. It was his first thought that Clelia Vine—the woman whom he knew and loved as Clelia Vine—should know before anyone else knew what had been forced upon him to know, and should know how she stood with regard to that knowledge of his, and prepare herself to meet the new conditions. So he braced himself up to a great effort, and he took the words of Sir Francis Rose with entire composure. He was anxious to learn as clearly as he could what were the elements of the situation with which Clelia Vine might have to deal.

‘Like your wife ?’ he asked in a sort of half-curious tone.

‘Did you really think so ?’

‘Yes, my dear Conrad ; by Jove, I did !’

‘Your wife was—I mean, is—I think you told me, very pretty ?’ Jim asked, trying to seem all cool, and careless, and serene.

‘Very pretty—yes, very pretty. The likeness, or the imaginary likeness, sent quite a thrill through me. Of course, it couldn’t have been my wife, but for the moment I was taken aback.’

‘Did the lady see you?’

‘No; I am quite sure she did not—or the other one, either. They were both looking away from me—looking after you, I have no doubt, as was indeed but highly natural.’

‘I can tell you the names of the ladies. One was Miss Gertrude Morefield, daughter of Mrs. Morefield, who has died——’

Sir Francis seemed to Jim to be a little startled by the name, but he spoke with an air of perfect indifference.

‘All right, my dear Conrad. Never mind about the name. Of course, it was all an absurd mistake of mine, and I think you are mainly responsible for it, with your unseasonable allusion to the church in Pagan’s Row. The other lady—she, too, I suppose, is unmarried?’

Jim could not prevent a flush coming into his face, and he found it difficult to answer.

‘I’ll tell you her name,’ he said, and he felt that Rose was studying him all the time.

‘No, no, my dear fellow; that would be indiscreet of me. Perhaps it is she who is responsible for the Patagonian expedition. Well, I am getting out here. Could you manage to look in at the Voyagers’ at eleven to-night? A man is coming to see me there—Captain Martin—whom I should like you to know.’

Jim was, for the moment, absorbed in thought. Then, as he was getting out of the cab, he merely said, ‘Yes, I’ll be there,’ and they parted.

Poor Jim’s mind was indeed tempest-tossed. He had little or nothing to go upon, and yet he felt convinced that he had made a terrible discovery. Then, as when a flash of lightning clears up the darkness for a moment, but only to make the path more dark and difficult for the way

that has yet to be traversed, Conrad saw for the instant all the realities of the situation, but was stricken blind as to what was to follow. Now he read for the first time, and in letters of light, the story of his strangely found, ill-gifted ring. Francisco—Rosita—he had discovered it all! Rose had called himself Francisco; she had evidently once been called in fond playfulness Rosita, because of his family name of Rose.

Jim knew it all now. The flash of lightning had illumined the immediate darkness. But how as to the way that still lay before him? Was it not darker and more perturbed than ever? Was he not the sworn comrade, it might almost be said, of the man who, whatever his wrongdoings, was the lawful husband of the woman whom poor Jim Conrad adored; the woman whose friends adored her; the woman of the blameless life, of the exalted moral conscience; the woman who had told Jim Conrad that she would have loved him—him!—if she were free to love at all, but who, out of her willingness to love, if such love were possible, had besought of him to love another woman and marry her?

His heart seemed bursting within him. There are times when mere emotion submerges for the moment even the common physical powers of hearing and of sight. Such a moment had come to—had come upon—plucky Jim Conrad. He knew it, and in his heart he was not ashamed. He was determined not to betray his real self.

He had, as has been said, little or nothing to go upon. Yet he was convinced. What had he to go upon? Only, in the first instance, the strange confusion of Sir Francis Rose when he heard of the church in Pagan's Row; the sudden surprise of Rose on seeing one of the women in the carriage; his declaration that she seemed like his wife;

and Jim's own very limited knowledge of Clelia Vine's story, and the names upon the ring.

But there was something more than all this—something which even the Psychological Society itself would find it hard to explain. At his very first meeting with Sir Francis Rose, Jim had felt himself drawn by some mysterious feeling which had almost as much in it of repulsion as of attraction. There was a vague sense of fear in it—the sort of fear which tells us that this meeting and this hour forbode sorrow to some other meeting and some other hour.

Never for a moment while under the full fascination of Rose's gay and gallant temperament, of his courage, his undaunted animal spirits, his bright talk, his frankly-proffered friendship, had Jim been free from a curious half-consciousness that all this could not last, and that one day or other Rose and he might be brought—he could not tell how—into antagonism—he could not imagine about what. Now that the first faint light of an explanation was given, Jim took it as a revelation.

'I always felt it,' he said to himself. 'I felt it when I didn't know anything about it.'

He was certain now that Sir Francis Rose was the Francisco of the ring, and the husband of Clelia Vine.

That night Jim received a line from Clelia, merely telling him that Gertrude and she were staying at a private hotel in Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, and asking him to come to see them next day. Later on that night he kept his appointment, and went to the Voyagers' Club to meet Sir Francis Rose and his friend. The friend was introduced to him as Captain Martin. He was a tall, well-set-up man, with a gorgeous shirt-front. He had been in Patagonia, Sir Francis said of him; but Captain Martin did not seem to have the common weakness of all or most

travellers, from Herodotus and Sinbad the Sailor downwards. He did not seem to care to say much about Patagonia, and, indeed, Jim did not want to hear much on that subject just then.

Jim was not in a mood to concern himself greatly about Patagonia. He was still possessed with a vague idea that the best thing he could do under all the conditions would be to take himself out of the way somewhere—anywhere; but he was not in the mood for appreciating instructions as to a definite journey to Patagonia in particular. He did not stay long—made a fresh appointment with Rose and went his way.

The three had been sitting and smoking in the little recess at the head of one of the flights of stairs—not in the regular smoking-room. There was no one now within hearing of Rose and Captain Martin.

‘You would know him again?’ Rose asked of the gallant Captain, nodding in the direction of the disappearing Conrad.

‘I should think so, Sir Francis,’ said the subservient Captain Martin.

‘Well, look here: I want you to keep a close eye on him. He lives in Clarges Street. There is his address. Let me know where he goes every day for the next week or so.’

‘All right, Sir Francis.’

‘And be sure you don’t let him see you.’

‘Oh, I’ll take good care of that.’

‘You can find out, I dare say, something about the people he goes to see—two ladies, very likely. You can manage to get something out of the servants, can’t you?’

‘I dare say I can manage that, Sir Francis;’ and the gallant Captain grinned again, as if quite pleased with himself.

‘Very good. Then, you can go now. I have some letters to write.’

Captain Martin rose, made an obsequious bow, and went his docile way. Now, the Army List contains the names of more than one Captain Martin, but it does not contain the name of that Captain Martin. For that Captain Martin was simply a private detective, who, having a good presentable appearance, and looking in evening dress quite like enough to a military man to pass muster, was employed by many men like Sir Francis Rose, who had a desire occasionally to find out what other people were doing. He was only the sort of assistant, however, whom Sir Francis Rose employed for very easy jobs of work.

Soon after Captain Martin had gone, Sir Francis had a visit from Mr. Waley. The good Waley was shown in, and sat with his chief in the recess above the stairs; and they had cigars. Mr. Waley seldom, except at meals, removed a cigar from his mouth, unless with the reasonable object of putting another cigar in. The two friends talked for a while over various business projects, and the refreshing whisky-and-soda went its round.

Suddenly Sir Francis said :

‘Look here, Waley: I want Marmaduke Coffin over here soon.’

‘Coffin over here? You don’t mean that! He won’t like to come, will he?’

‘All the same, he’ll have to come.’

‘What in the nation can you want him for?’

‘Well, I may have use for him—I may want him to do something that he can do better than anybody else.’

‘Half a moment, chief’—and here the thumb went, as a matter of course, halfway up the first joint of the fore-finger; ‘am I to know anything about this business?’

‘Not for the moment, my dear Waley.’

‘But later on?’

‘Later on? Why, of course—you shall know everything.’

‘That’s enough. When do you want Coffin?’

‘Let me see. I’ll tell you to-morrow.’

‘All right,’ said the faithful Waley.

So they turned to talk about other things.

The time came when, in the ordinary course, parting ought to take place. It seemed to the considerate Waley that it ought to take place all the more promptly just then because the mind of his chief had evidently been quite away for many minutes from the subjects of conversation. So he stood up, and was about to say good-night.

‘Not yet, Waley, please,’ Sir Francis interposed, with a suddenly awakened interest and energy. ‘Sit down for a moment or two longer.’

‘All right,’ the dutiful Waley answered, and he sat down and waited.

There was absolute silence for a few seconds. Then Sir Francis struck his clenched hand on the little table in front of him.

‘Tell me, Waley,’ he asked, ‘have you not known days when you are suddenly made aware—you can’t tell how—that something is going to happen to you—that you are going to do something, to undertake something, which may change the whole course of your life? Have you not known such days as that, Waley?’

The cautious Waley thought for a little.

‘Well, no,’ he answered slowly; ‘I can’t say that I have. You see, when I’m going to make a venture of any kind, I’ve generally thought it all out beforehand, and I

know what the risks are, and I'm equal to it all, naturally; and so it doesn't come upon me like a streak of greased lightning, don't you see, Sir Francis?

'But, good heavens, man! do you mean to say that you have never had a day when it was borne in upon you that you had come to a new crisis in your life? I believe the novelists would call it an epoch-making day?'

'Dare say they would—I could believe anything of them, although I don't know much about them, for I ain't a novel-reader myself. But my wife used to read novels.'

'Oh, confound your wife!'

'Confound my wife if you like, for all I care,' Waley said rather stiffly; 'but I believe, whatever the faults of a man's wife may be, it is not usual in the circles which you adorn, chief, and in which I don't shine, to confound a man's wife to his face. Leave the husband to confound her for himself; that's my idea of the proper way to do things.'

And Mr. Waley again stood up with an air of injured dignity.

Sir Francis knew very well that Mr. Waley was no mere led-captain, and serf, and sycophant. He had, indeed, on the whole, more respect for his faithful henchman than he had for anyone else in the world.

'Sit down again, Waley: I beg your pardon most sincerely. I did not mean to say anything in the slightest degree disrespectful to Mrs. Waley. But I forgot myself. I am in an irritable condition of the nerves, and the mention of anybody's wife puts me out. Sit down, my dear fellow, and accept my sincere apologies.'

'Oh, it's all right,' the good-natured Waley answered eagerly, his sudden anger quite faded out of his face and of his heart. 'Don't you talk about apologies—nothing

of the sort is wanted between you and me. But you were talking of epoch-making days'—for Waley considered that common politeness made it necessary for him to bring back the conversation to the point at which it had been broken off, and thereby to show that he took a deep and friendly interest in it.

'Yes,' Sir Francis said, but in a somewhat languid and even melancholy tone, quite different from that in which he had suddenly started the subject. 'I have found such epoch-making days now and again in my time, and I am satisfied that this is one of them. I know it, Waley! I could not be more sure of it if one were to rise from the dead and warn me of it.'

'Has anything happened?' Waley asked in a tone of something like alarm; for there was no mistaking the earnestness of his chief.

'Nothing has happened, nothing whatever. I mean, nothing that anybody would call anything. You see, if anything tremendous had happened, there would be no particular wonder in my knowing that the day was an epoch in my life. No, Waley, there is nothing to tell. But I know that I shall do something which will change the whole course of my life.'

'What put that into your head?'

'Two or three words, a glimpse at a face, a fancied resemblance—I don't well know what.'

'But what do you want to do?'

'Ah, my good Waley, there you have me,' Sir Francis replied, with a smile. He had now quite recovered his self-control. 'You must ask me something easier. I don't know what I want to do, but I feel it borne in upon me that I shall do something.'

'Don't you go to do anything rash,' Waley said, with

much anxiety in his voice ; ‘and don’t you go to do anything without consulting me. Don’t you remember the awful muddle we made over those Black Yarra mines——’

‘The awful muddle we made? The awful muddle *I* made, my dear Waley,’ Sir Francis interposed, with a sweet smile.

‘Well, what I mean is this : the awful muddle we made between us, because for once we acted without consulting together.’

‘My dear Waley, nobody could gloss over my stupid, headstrong blunder in that case more charmingly than you do.’

‘Never mind about all that ! But don’t you go to do anything without our talking it out in advance.’

‘This is a different sort of thing ; it has nothing to do with mines and ventures and all that sort of prosaic business.’

‘All the same, I should feel a sight more comfortable if I knew that I was to be talked to before anything was done.’

‘But it may be something which concerns me alone.’

‘Don’t matter about that ; a man isn’t often the best judge of his own affairs, don’t you see?’

‘Yes, that’s all right ; but there come times when a man must act for himself—when he must follow his star.’

‘Oh, bother his star ! that sort of thing is all rot and poetry ! I say,’ Waley asked, suddenly seized with a new idea, ‘is it about this business, or this idea of yours, or whatever it is, that Coffin is to be brought over to London ? That’s what I want to know.’

‘Yes, Waley, it is. I want Coffin to find out a few things for me. It may come to nothing—I don’t know ; but perhaps I shall want to make use of him. Don’t ask

me for any more explanations. You see, I can't tell you anything; and, really, as I said before, there is nothing to be told.'

'Yes, but now look here. Only half an hour ago—there or thereabouts—when you told me you wanted Coffin over in London, you said I would know all at the right time. Now you tell me I am not to know. How is this? I can't see into it rightly.'

'My dear Waley,' Sir Francis said, rousing himself again into a little animation, 'you know that I can't do without you in anything. Yes, of course I shall keep to my word. Of course you shall know in good time.'

'Honour bright, honest Injin?' Waley asked, using as his two closing words a phrase borrowed from his American reminiscences.

'Honour bright!'

'And before anything is done?'

'Yes, certainly,' Sir Francis answered, with the air of one who is growing wearied of the discussion. 'I promise you, Waley, that you shall be called into council before anything is done.'

'All right,' said Waley, rising again; and then he took his leave.

As he passed into the street, he muttered to himself:

'Never saw the chief like that since the night when he told me he had put everything he had into the Black Yarra mines, and that it was borne in upon him that the Black Yarra was to come to grief, and I had so much trouble to keep him from blowing his brains out!'

And so he went his way.

'I wish I hadn't told him anything,' Sir Francis said to himself as he got into his cab to go home. 'But I couldn't help it; the impulse was on me; I must say

something to somebody. Perhaps it is just as well. I may want some control. Suppose it's all nonsense and nothing! Suppose it wasn't she! Oh, but it was she!

CHAPTER XVIII.

JIM IS AN UNWELCOME MESSENGER.

It was with a beating heart that Jim Conrad found himself at the door of the private hotel in Albemarle Street next day. In an odd sort of way, he could not help contrasting the well-ordered commonplace of the hotel with his own disturbed and impassioned mood. It did not look like the sort of place to hold a woman with a story like that of Clelia Vine; for he felt sure that he knew most of her story now. Nor did it even seem a fitting place to enclose the grief and the bereavement of Gertrude Morefield. As if a tragic story must always be told in tragic tones—as if grief must for ever carry a funeral wreath!

He rang the bell; these small, well-ordered private hotels in the West End do not have their doors always open to the stranger, as the doors of the good Axylus were in the 'Iliad.' A page-boy opened for him, and when Jim asked for Miss Morefield, he was bidden to follow the youth, and was conducted into a sitting-room on the first-floor, and politely informed that the fact of his arrival would be made known to Miss Morefield.

He had a few minutes in which to study the room. He could see that it was in itself, in its furniture, and in its preconceived arrangements, a model of the best-class sitting-room in the small private hotel of the West End. But he could also see that the room had been disarranged,

re-arranged, and almost reconstructed. The table had been taken away from its conventional place in the centre of the room—Jim could see that—and had been set against one of the walls, and it was covered with books and flowers. On the formal sofas were thrown pretty pieces of Eastern work—Algerian work, as Jim assumed—made up for the most part of silk and of gold embroidery. It was not possible, of course, to abolish altogether the vapid framed engravings that were supposed to adorn the walls; but there were several pretty sketches set up that showed of artistic taste and refinement testing itself in crooked high-staired Algerian streets and in Kabyle villages. Jim could see in his mind's eye the two girls reconstructing the room, and determined amid all their trouble to make it a habitable home for mortals endowed with some manner of artistic culture. His mind went back to the room in the Paris hotel, where he had first been entertained by the Morefields, and it must be owned that he felt a certain difficulty in controlling the outer and visible expression of his emotions.

Then there was a tread of light feet on the stairs, and a rustle of petticoats, and in a moment Gertrude Morefield and Clelia Vine were in the room. Jim could not help noticing a certain difference in the way in which the girls met him. Miss Morefield was perfectly composed and serene. She greeted him with a friendly welcoming smile, which seemed to have nothing of a past behind it. But the tears sprang into Clelia's eyes as she held out her hand to welcome him. Jim understood the different ways of the two girls in a moment, and by instinct. Gertrude had, of course, set up for herself some theory as to how women should comport themselves in the most solemn trials of life. Clelia had no theory; she let her feelings show

themselves if they would. He thought Clelia was looking handsomer than ever. The thought brought a pang with it. She was looking handsomer because the very expression of sorrow that spoke out of her eyes and from the deep shades beneath her eyes and from her trembling lips seemed to cry out for sympathy and comfort, and he had nothing but bad news to bring her. For he had made up his mind that he must tell her how he had become acquainted with her story and with her husband.

Then they talked. The girls told him all about their travels and about their uncertainty as to where they were going next. They did not think of staying very long in London; but, then, they were quite uncertain as to their prospects and projects, 'and,' Clelia said, 'we are, as you know, fatally independent.'

'Yes, I know,' Jim said, and he did not quite know what to say next.

'We were thinking of going to America,' Gertrude said. 'I suppose that in the New World we should get some new ideas as to the destiny of womanhood and of the whole human race.'

'But is it much of a new world?' Jim asked. 'Hasn't it, too, grown pretty old already?'

'Oh no, I think not—I hope not!' cried Gertrude fervently. 'I am sure we shall find some new ideas still there.'

'We thought of going to India, too,' Clelia said, 'and to China and Japan. My sentiments lead me rather to the old places than to the new. But, then, I am afraid I have not the earnest purpose that fills Gertrude's heart—the purpose to do good to womanhood and to the human race in general, man and woman.'

'Come, Clelia, I won't allow you to say that of yourself

—even to Mr. Conrad, who knows you. You must not believe a word she says of that kind, Mr. Conrad. She is as much concerned in doing good to women and to men as I am. Oh, what a way to put it!—as if I were trying to praise myself and to make out that I was bent on becoming a great public benefactress!

‘Never mind, dear,’ Clelia said. ‘No one who knows you will ever suppose that you made any attempt to get praise or honour for yourself. Certainly Mr. Conrad knows you too well for that.’

‘Oh yes,’ Jim said quietly, and yet with a certain shyness in his voice. ‘I know Miss Morefield quite too well for that.’

He had given up calling the girls by their names. The time for effusiveness, he thought, had gone by. He was made shy only because he could not help remembering how Clelia had striven to make him fall in love with Miss Morefield and had urged him to make love to her.

Then they came to more general talk, and Jim lingered on and on only too gladly.

They were dining rather early. Miss Morefield pressed Jim to stay and join their little dinner. Jim stayed most willingly. The company of these two young women was genial to him. In a curious sort of way he seemed to look upon Gertrude Morefield as one who out of her sorrow had grown older, and attained to something like the position of a matron. When first he knew her, and, until now, all the time he had known her, she was a girl under the charge of her mother. Now she was all alone, and privileged to act for herself. Now she could choose her own place of residence—could travel or sit still just as she pleased. It seemed natural to Jim that she should ask him to stay to dinner, and that he should accept the invitation.

So they dined together—they three.

‘Tell me,’ Gertrude said, ‘the name of the champagne you used to like.’

‘Oh, any wine will do for me,’ Jim answered abruptly.

‘Yes, but I know there was a wine you did especially like—a champagne of some brand. My mother knew all about it, and always ordered it for you. Please let me do the same.’

Jim felt a little astonished that she should thus talk of her mother in connection with so trivial a subject. Perhaps his face showed in its expression something like the thought, for she looked at him fixedly, and then said :

‘You wonder at my speaking of my mother in that way? Yes, I know you do. But do you really think my mother is actually dead—dead—dead for me?’

Jim was unable to make any reply.

Gertrude replied for herself.

‘My mother is just as much alive for me now as if she sat by my side,’ Gertrude calmly declared. ‘It is only as if I were here and she were in San Remo. It is only a question of the time of separation; we shall meet again soon or late. She lives for me still, and I for her. I don’t believe in death. There is no such thing as death!’

‘In that sense,’ said Jim, ‘you speak the truth. There is no such thing as death; but we commonplace mortals cannot feel so nobly and so purely as that. I cannot. To me death is death.’

‘And to me,’ said Clelia sadly. ‘I agree with you. I admire Gertrude for taking so exalted a view of life and of eternity; but I cry over my losses, and I think them my losses, all the same.’

‘I believe in the continuity of humanity,’ said Gertrude solemnly.

‘I suppose I do, too, if I quite knew what it was,’ Clelia declared; ‘but I don’t think I do know. And, besides, darling Gertrude, you are peculiar in one way. When you continue your humanity into another world, there is no one likely to be there whom you will dread to meet. Some others are not so lucky. You will go to rejoin your mother. There are women who—well, I adored my mother, and if she alone could claim me in the other world, ah! then I should be glad to say that there was no such thing as death!’

Jim was astonished. He had never before heard Miss Vine, as he must still call her, make such open allusion to the peculiar conditions of her life. He was touched by the confidence it showed between her and Gertrude—between her and him.

‘No,’ Gertrude said decisively, and as one who felt that the time had come to close the discussion, ‘I never could admit that my mother was dead to me. She is not; she is alive for me; she is with me always.’

Jim looked up at her, and he could see that, for all her convictions, and for all her confidence, and for all her refusal to recognise the existence of such a thing as death, her eyes now, and for the first time, were swimming in tears. Alas! set up any theory of life or death you will, life and death remain life and death, and are proven by our own tears as well as by our own smiles. Jim was sure that Gertrude’s theory commanded her mind, but he was equally sure that it did not command her heart, and he could see for himself that it had no manner of control over the tears in her eyes.

‘Come,’ said Clelia courageously; ‘all this time we have not ordered the champagne, and we don’t even know what we are to order. Do you know, Mr. Conrad, a man told me not very long ago that he felt sure a woman’s only idea

of dinner—apart, of course, from a regular dinner-party—was something on a tray. Do you think we are as bad as that?’

‘Well, not all of you,’ Jim said, delighted to give the talk a little brighter flow.

Then they talked of many things. The girls unfolded some of their vague plans to Jim; Jim found in his mind some objection to every one of them. His first wish was that they should stay in London while he was there; but he had, to do him justice, a stronger and a deeper feeling than that. He knew that they could not possibly settle on any plans until Clelia had become possessed of the story he had to tell her. It was a grim duty he had to perform, but he had to perform it. He wondered to himself whether he should get a chance of speaking to her alone that night, or whether he should have to go away without telling her anything, and then write to her and ask her to see him and hear what he had to say. He felt as if he could not speak before Gertrude, although he had not the slightest doubt that whatever he told to Clelia would be told at once by her to Miss Morefield.

The dinner passed over. Jim was allowed to smoke a cigarette; he would have been allowed to smoke a cigar if only he had had the courage to ask for such a permission. The windows were open, and the soft spring air of the twilight came freely in. The lamps were lighted.

‘Oh,’ Gertrude said abruptly, and rising from her chair, ‘I must finish a letter. Do excuse me; and please, Clelia, don’t let Mr. Conrad go until I come back—I shan’t be long.’

‘Oh, I shan’t go,’ Jim replied.

Then Clelia and he were alone, and Clelia turned to him with an impatient look.

‘Come,’ she said eagerly; ‘you have something to tell me. I see it in your eyes; I saw it all the evening.’

‘I have something to tell you. Do you know who is in town, and has seen you?’

Clelia’s eyebrows contracted, and she pressed her hand suddenly, unwittingly, against her heart, and a flush came over her face; she had not in her mind the slightest doubt as to what she was going to hear.

‘Tell me,’ was all she said.

‘Your husband is in town, and has seen you.’

‘Oh God!’ she murmured; then her head sank.

‘Yes, it is true,’ Jim said. ‘I came to tell you.’

‘But how do you know?’ she asked, somewhat defiantly, lifting her head again, and looking fixedly into his face.

‘Who told you? I never told you even his name.’

‘No, you never did, but I know it now. You are Lady Rose.’

‘Lady Rose? Lady? Is his father dead?’

‘Yes, and your very question settles it all for me. Your husband is now Sir Francis Rose. You were once called Rosita by him because of his family name, were you not? and he called himself Francisco. And I found the ring which you threw away one day in the Bois de Boulogne, and I little thought when I found it that I should ever come to know you and to—and—yes—yes—I can’t help it—and to love you.’

‘Oh, hush, hush, my friend!’ she said, in a low and frightened tone; ‘you must not talk like that; you must not think like that.’

‘I can’t think any other way,’ Jim said doggedly. ‘I shall think of you always like that. But I’ll not speak about it, if you like. No, never once again. I can promise that—that’s about all I can promise. After all, what does

it matter to you whether I love you or not? It is no fault of yours if I do love you.'

'It does matter to me ever so much,' she interrupted. 'I want you to be happy, and you can't be happy if you throw your love away——'

'It's my own love,' Jim replied, in the same tone and mood. 'Let me throw it where I like. You can't prevent me.'

'I can't, indeed; I wish I could! And I believe all you say, and I almost wish I didn't. And so you found that ring?' she said eagerly, turning the perilous talk away.

'I found it, yes; why did you throw it away? It was you who threw it away, of course?'

'Oh yes, it was I.'

'Yes, I knew that; I figured it all out, but only lately—quite lately. It cost me many sleepless nights before that, I can tell you.'

'Poor boy!' she said gently and compassionately. 'What led you to take any interest in the ring of somebody utterly unknown to you?'

'How could I tell you? It was fate, I suppose; at least, that is the grand way in which the writers of romance would put it. I knew from the very moment when I picked it up that it would have something to do with my life, and so it has—so it has. Tell me: why did you throw it away?'

'My friend, I can't tell you that. I have so much sense of loyalty and of what you men call honour—and which you say is unknown to women——'

'I never said anything of the kind, and I never thought anything of the kind,' Jim grumbled out.

'Well, never mind; I only meant some men. I have so much of the sense of loyalty and of honour left in me that I will not arraign my husband to anyone—even to

Gertrude, even to you. There! let us be done with that. Tell me: does he know that he saw me? Does he know that I am in London?

‘I think not. But if he cares to take the pains, he can easily enough find out.’

‘He will not care to take the pains. I am nothing to him.’

‘I read him differently,’ said Jim sadly.

She looked at him with a glance of keen inquiry, but she restrained herself and said nothing on that subject.

‘You must tell me about the finding of that ring,’ she said, ‘another time, not now. And you must give me back the ring.’

‘If you wish for it, certainly.’

‘If I wish for it! Yes. If I could wish for anything! I only wish I could wish for anything—even for the moon!’

She smiled a wild smile, and the heart of the young man was touched to the very quick. He longed to touch her hand in merest token of sympathy, but he did not dare to do it. Indeed, to what purpose should he do it? She knew all that he felt just as well as he did. A pressure of the hand would make no difference. Into the story of her life love was now forbidden to come.

Clelia recovered her composure in a moment, and spoke in quiet, subdued tones.

‘You shall tell me about the ring another time. Gertrude will be back in a few moments.’

‘What do you mean to tell her?’

‘About what?’

‘Well, about what I have just told you.’

‘About my husband being in London?’

‘Yes.’

‘Oh, I shall tell her that he is in London. I shall tell

her, my friend, all that I tell to you—but no more. She will not ask to know any more. She has full trust in me—you have full trust in me?’

‘I have indeed,’ he said fervently. ‘I trust in you as I trust in heaven.’

‘Generosity of youth! Take care that you don’t turn out cynical later on, and talk of women as if they were beings that came from a different place—not heaven. Is not that the fashion of the present day?’

‘I know nothing of the fashions of the present day,’ Jim said vehemently. ‘I know what I think about you.’

‘Thank you,’ she said gently.

‘Look here, hadn’t you better think of leaving London soon? I don’t want you to go, but would it not be well?’

‘To avoid being seen?’

‘Yes; perhaps to avoid being persecuted.’

‘Oh, there is no fear,’ she said, not without bitterness. ‘Why should he persecute me? It was not from me it came. Well, well, well, never mind. Still, if Gertrude wishes to go, I shall have no wish to stay. There is nothing to keep me in London.’

‘Nothing?’ poor Jim asked, quite forgetting himself for the moment, and putting a question which he ought not to have put.

She turned on him with a look of kindness and compassion.

‘Nothing!’ she said firmly. ‘The less you and I see of each other for the present—ah, perhaps for ever—the better. Hush! here is Gertrude.’

And Gertrude came into the room, and they talked about things in general.

‘Don’t leave town without letting me know,’ Jim said, as he was getting up to say good-bye.

‘Oh no! surely not,’ Gertrude said, with round wondering eyes at his words.

Why, she asked herself, should he imagine that they would leave town without letting him know?

Jim saw her surprised look, and knew he had said a stupid thing. His heart was touched. He could not bring himself readily to believe that the girl cared about him; but the mere fact that her closest friend had told him that she did care about him seemed to bring Gertrude into a relation of unspoken sympathy to him. He did not disguise from himself the truth that he had not of late been thinking very much about her at all. He had been absorbed in his own love-affair: he had no time or thought for her. He was like everybody else in this—man and woman. Nothing is so self-centred as love; no, not even hunger, not even thirst.

Jim made no attempt to set right his blunder, and he took his leave, with permission to call again next day, and any day as long as the girls remained in town. The moment he got into the street his mind was again absorbed in Clelia. Gertrude dropped wholly out of his consideration. He would have thought of her, if he had time; but then he had not time. He was wholly taken up with Clelia. Some of her words puzzled him. He turned over and over again what she said about her loyalty to her husband. ‘Can it be,’ he asked himself with a pang, ‘that in her heart there is even still some trace of love for him? Can it be that she would even yet be open to his talk and to his persuasions if he chose to exert them?’ And then again for one moment he put the question to himself: ‘Would it not be better that she should go back to him, and make the best of her married life, since she was married and could not escape from

marriage?" But 'No, no, no!' Jim resolutely said to himself; 'with that man she never could be happy; with that man she never could live!' Poor Jim believed that he was absolutely unselfish, and was thinking only about her when he came to this conclusion. Perhaps he was. Certainly, the more he had seen of Sir Francis Rose, the greater and more growing had been his suspicion, or his conviction, that behind all that gay and reckless and debonair exterior there was in hiding and on the watch a reckless, a selfish, and a ruthless nature. Why he thought all this he could not explain; but it had for a long time back been borne in upon him.

'Well,' he said to himself at last—and the assurance brought him some poor and pitiful little comfort—'he has no motive in trying to win her back. He has nothing to get by her.'

In which self-offered assurance Jim made two mistakes: one as to character, and one as to fact.

CHAPTER XIX.

'HAST THOU FOUND ME OUT, O MINE ENEMY?'

THE gallant Captain Martin paid several visits to Sir Francis Rose during the days that immediately followed the roving commission which had been given to him. Apparently, the information which he supplied to his patron was clear enough to tell Rose that the time had come when he ought to make a move, and he saw his way to the making of it.

'The other lady,' said the warlike Captain, 'will be out all the afternoon.'

'Oh! And Miss Vine?'

'Miss Vine? she will be alone.'

'Do you know anything about Mr. Conrad?'

'Mr. Conrad and Mr. Waley have an appointment together for the City at two o'clock, and their business will last them a couple of hours.'

'Good! That's all right.'

Captain Martin crouched his shoulders; he meant that for bowing.

'Did you say anything at the hotel?'

'Yes; I explained that you were a near relation of Miss Vine——'

'By marriage,' Rose interposed, with a faint smile.

'Well, I'm not quite sure that I said by marriage——'

'Doesn't matter at all.'

'No. And I said that Miss Vine would be expecting you to-day, and that you were to be shown up when you called.'

'Suppose they don't show me up when I call?'

'They will, Sir Francis.'

'Suppose they ask questions?'

'There will be no questions asked, Sir Francis.'

Captain Martin spoke in the assured tone of one who has taken all his precautions and made the way quite clear and safe.

'Good!' said Rose. 'You seem to have managed this business well, Martin.'

'I always try to manage matters well for gentlemen whom I serve, Sir Francis.'

'I know you do,' Sir Francis replied genially.

And the interview came to an end.

Sir Francis made his way to Albemarle Street, and found the hotel, and asked to be shown up to Miss Vine's sitting-room. There was no difficulty, and there were no

questions asked ; he was shown up at once. The attendant stopped at the door of a room on the first-floor.

‘Is this Miss Vine’s room?’ Sir Francis asked.

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Then, please announce Sir Francis Rose.’

The attendant threw the door open, and announced in the clearest tone, ‘Sir Francis Rose,’ and Rose entered and closed the door behind him, and found himself after a moment face to face with his wife.

The whole situation seemed to him to be full of the deepest, or at all events the most piquant, interest. It was a gain to him, a new sensation to him, and therefore a joy to him, to have a moment like that.

For the first second or so when he entered the room he did not see Clelia. At the farther end of the room, close to a window, there was a solid writing-table—not a mere lady-like trifle at all, but a good substantial writing-table. It was rich with ferns and flowers; behind the ferns and the flowers Clelia sat writing.

When the announcement was made, she sprang up from her seat, with pallid face and gleaming eyes. She kept, however, a perfect mastery of herself while the attendant was in the room. When she heard the door close she advanced a little from behind her entrenchment of ferns and flowers and desk, and confronted Rose, in agitation indeed, but undismayed.

‘Hast thou found me out,’ she said in thrilling Biblical language, ‘O mine enemy?’

She was carried out of herself and her ordinary speech by the shock of the meeting.

‘I have found you out,’ Rose answered, in a voice made purposely low and pathetic; ‘but I am not your enemy. I want to be your best friend.’

‘Oh!’ she murmured, with a shudder that really shook her whole frame.

‘Why do you hate me, Clelia? I still love you.’

‘Oh, for shame!’ she exclaimed. ‘Shame—shame—to talk like that—after all that has passed—all that we know!’

‘I still love you,’ he repeated. ‘Do you know that since that day—only a few days ago—when I first saw you—this time—I was fascinated by you? Yes, I was! Do you know that at first I hardly knew you, you had grown to have such an ivory-pale complexion? I never could admire what I may call a pallid-pale complexion or a sallow-pale complexion; but such an ivory-pale complexion as yours——’

‘Do you think we need go on with this talk?’ she asked contemptuously. ‘Do you think I care what you may fancy about my complexion, or what anybody may fancy? Think of my life made miserable by you; of my youth gone in suffering through you; and then, if you will, talk to me about my complexion.’

‘I am not paying you empty compliments,’ he said; ‘I am only telling you how I felt.’

‘Very well, you like my ivory-pale complexion. You have told me that. But that, I suppose, is not all you have come here to tell me.’

‘No; I have come to tell you much more.’

‘Well, go on; it can all be told very shortly, can’t it?’

‘You are impatient, but I find no fault. It shall be told as shortly and as quickly as words can tell it. Clelia, I know how much wrong I have done you, and I want to repair it and to atone for it.’

‘Listen,’ she answered steadily; ‘it is not a question of wrong done to me. A woman could soon forget that!’

God knows, we women are only too ready to forget the wrongs done us by men in whom once we trusted and whom once we loved. It is not that.'

'Then, you are willing—or, at least, not unwilling—to forgive any wrong that I may have done you? That would be a relief to my soul.'

'Oh, I am not thinking about any wrong done to me. It is over—it is gone—and I have no further concern with it.'

'Then, can we not make it up?' he asked, in a gentle and pleading voice, in the softest tone—a delicate tone which only appealed for pity, and forgiveness, and confidence.

The tone went like a sharp blade through Clelia's heart and nerves, for all its pleading sweetness and its melting softness. She had heard it too often before.

'Make it up!' she exclaimed. 'As if we had merely had some trumpery quarrel over some paltry and pitiful question!'

'I have lead rather a wild life,' he pleaded. 'You knew that before you married me.'

'No!' she cried. 'I never did! You took good care that I never should. You told me yourself that you had led a wandering life, and that you had been a ne'er-do-well, but that you had done nothing cruel, or mean, or wicked. Did you not tell me all that?'

'A man in love may surely be forgiven if—when he is pressing a woman to marry him—he does not tell her all the literal truth about his past life.'

'No, he may not be forgiven! He may not be forgiven for telling falsehoods. I didn't want you to tell me the literal truth about all your past life. But you told me, again and again, that there was nothing in your past life

of which a man of honour could have reason to be ashamed. And I believed you! Oh, what a fool I was to believe you! But I did—I did!

‘But you surely must have guessed at something? You must have heard some talk in Northumberland?’

‘What did I care—what would any girl have cared under such conditions—for the talk of some county families? I had your own assurance, and, of course, I believed it—and that was more to me than the talk of a dozen counties. When a girl loves a man she believes him.’

‘Then, you did love me—at that time?’ he said, with a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes.

‘Oh yes, I loved you at that time; you know it well. I should not have believed you if I had not loved you. I should not have loved you if I had not believed you. I thought, perhaps, you had gambled and spent a wild life in many countries. I fancied you had run deep into debt and set your people against you. But I thought that was all, and I made up my mind that your people were unjust and ungenerous to you—and any girl could tell you how a woman would feel in such a case towards a man whom she loved.’

‘You believed me then.’

‘I believed every word you said to me.’

‘Well, and what has changed you, after all?’

‘Changed me? I am not changed! I was entrapped, and that was all. The man I married was not the man I thought I was marrying. There is the whole story. I thought I was marrying a lover, and a hero, and a gentleman, and a man of honour, and——’

‘Yes—go on.’

‘Is there any need for me to go on any further?’

‘Yes, there is. Tell me whom you were really marrying.’

He spoke now in a deep stern tone.

‘I was marrying’—and she paused and turned away from him with the contemptuous words—‘I was marrying—you.’

‘That defines me very well to myself, but it does not give me quite a clear idea of myself as I appear in your eyes. Tell me, Clelia—Rosita’—she contracted her shoulders nervously at the name of Rosita—‘tell me exactly whom you married!’

‘I married a man who had lived various and shameful lives under various names in many countries. I married a man who had swindled widows and orphans. I married a man who had bought his own safety more than once by betraying his comrades.’

‘Of course you were naturally angry about that little affair with your mother’s money. I don’t blame you. I admit that I acted very badly about that. But I never meant her to lose the money. I meant to pay it back.’

‘Why didn’t you ask her to lend it? She would have lent it. I could have prevailed upon her to lend it. She would have done it for me.’

‘I managed it clumsily, I confess,’ he said thoughtfully. ‘Let me see now—what was it I did say? Oh yes: that I knew a splendid investment—yes, I remember—where it would be all safe and that sort of thing. That was wrong.’

‘And you kept on for two years making her believe that her poor little fortune was safe and was growing.’

‘Yes, yes, that was wrong; haven’t I said so? But at the time I was terribly pressed for some debts—money I owed—some unlucky connections formed before our marriage.’

‘Not all before our marriage.’

‘Not all, perhaps, but nearly all. And, then, I wanted

to keep up my character in your eyes, and to keep our home happy; and if I had not had the money things might have come out, and you would have been disappointed in me, and I did so love you.’

‘I should have been far less disappointed in you if you had told me all and trusted to me,’ she exclaimed. ‘I was a mad girl at that time—mad, mad!—and I might have loved you and clung to you in spite of all. But why do we go on talking about all this now? I did cling to you, even then. Did I throw you away? Did I leave you? Or did you deliberately leave me and throw me away—yes, actually throw me away?’

‘It must have looked like that, I suppose,’ he answered calmly. ‘I was in one of my absurd moods, and I thought I had gone too far to be taken back on any decent terms; and so it seemed to me at the moment the only good turn I could do for you was to get out of your sight for ever. I thought we could never be happy again, and there is something in my nature which makes me hate not to be happy.’

He spoke these last words in a reflecting sort of way, and looking at her as if he were propounding some interesting moral proposition, concerning which he expected to have her full sympathy. She listened and she looked at him. At last she said:

‘I feel a sort of compassion for you—I do indeed.’

‘You would—you would if you knew me,’ he exclaimed with eagerness. ‘I sometimes feel a compassion for myself.’

‘Ah yes; that I can quite understand. I do know you—I know you only too well. You always seem to me now like a man who was born without a conscience, even more than that—like a man who was born without a soul.’

‘Do you know,’ he said, quite seriously, ‘I have some-

times thought the same thing about myself. I have sometimes thought that I have no soul; but can there be such a thing? Of course, all sorts of materialists say that we none of us have any souls, and on that point I am not qualified to express any dogmatic opinion. But would it be possible for one man to have no soul while all other people, or, at all events, most other people, had souls? That seems to me unlikely, and yet it has often occurred to me as if it must have happened in my case. Because I never feel really sorry for anything, or responsible about anything.'

'Well,' Clelia said sadly, after a pause, 'it is of no use our talking about these things—at least, I mean it is of no use our arguing about them. We see everything from such a different point of view. I could not live with you again. You have no sense of right and wrong.'

'Oh, come! what is right, and what is wrong?'

'When I had become convinced of that by bitter and cruel experience,' she said, unheeding his interruption, 'I felt that my life was a failure, and that we could never indeed, as you have said, be happy again. Still, I clung to you, and I hoped against hope. Then you threw me off, and after that my heart became as adamant. Yes, it did!'

'Threw you off! Well, is not that rather a harsh expression?'

'Call it by any name you like.'

'You mean when I sent you that ring?'

'When you sent me that ring, with the engraved message—that message of mock tragic farewell which it conveyed.'

'I thought it only fair. I was making a fool of myself at the time. I had fallen terribly in love with a woman who was not really fit to tie your shoe-strings, and I thought

it was only right to give you a hint that way. Apropos, where is the ring? Have you got it?’

‘No, I have not.’

‘What has become of it?’

‘I flung it away. I flung it from me in the Bois de Boulogne, near the railings where I gave it to you, where you gave me that other ring—near the place where we first met long before.’

‘Was it not rather imprudent to throw the ring away in such a public place? Somebody might pick it up.’

‘I didn’t care about that, so long as I was rid of it.’

‘It might spell out a story.’

‘What did I care then whether it did or not? What do I care now? Can you not understand my misery and my madness? Nothing could alter the story, let who will spell it out.’

‘Well,’ he said slowly, as if he were thinking over some new proposition in social science, ‘I suppose women never look at these things quite as men do.’

‘I suppose not. I hope not—if men in general look at them as you do. But they don’t—I know they don’t.’

‘Indeed! has anyone been trying to teach you? Don’t believe him; he is sure to be only a humbug.’

She paid no attention to this remark, or, rather, she simply tossed it from her.

‘You have not told me yet,’ she said, ‘why you came here, or how you found me out.’

‘I came to do my best to make up matters between us.’

‘Make up matters! Do you think it is a commonplace quarrel about some trumpery difference of opinion?’

‘No, no. I don’t say that; but I do say that there is no reason why we should not be content with each other, and be together again. Listen to me, Rosita.’

‘Oh! please don’t use that name again!’

‘I’ll use any name that pleases you,’ he said sternly; ‘Clelia, Lady Rose—anything you will—my wife, if you will put up with that. I have come to tell you something.’

‘Tell it to me, and then go away and leave me with my misery.’

‘I have not come to leave you with your misery. I have come to take you from your misery. I have come to make you happy.’

‘Oh!’ she groaned.

‘Yes, I have—if only you will consent to act like a sensible woman.’

‘Well, tell me what a sensible woman ought to do. I shall listen.’

‘Why, of course, she ought to take back her husband when he comes to her repentant, and confesses his errors, and simply pleads for pardon and for pity. Listen, Rosita, my wife. I have come here because I love you; because the very moment I saw you the other day I fell in love with you again—all over again. I said to my soul, “Why did I ever fail to appreciate that divine woman?” I did indeed; I did, on my honour. “How could I have allowed myself to be fooled away from her by any idle illusions of my own?” I only want to be redeemed and regenerated. Take me; redeem me; regenerate me.’

His voice sounded exquisitely in its pleading cadence. Francis Rose knew its fascination. For the moment he felt divinely happy. He delighted in his power of stage-play. There was an entire novelty about the situation which positively fascinated him.

‘Heaven knows,’ she said sorrowfully, ‘that if I believed I could do any good for you I would try to do it, even at the utter sacrifice of myself. But, oh! I know it is all of

no use. It amuses you now to play this part. When once this had been played, and played successfully, you would want to be amused by trying some quite different part. We both know—you and I perfectly well know—that we could not make life happy, or even endurable, for each other. Ah, no! Gone is gone; dead is dead!’

‘I am in love with you,’ he declared, ‘as I never was before, and you must come with me.’

‘So far as my own feelings are concerned,’ she said, ‘you know that I would rather go into the Thames than return to you. But I can’t throw myself into the Thames, because I can’t commit such a crime. I suppose I was sent into the world for some purpose, and I must stay here until I am ordered away. But so far as my own feelings are concerned, I should welcome the river as a relief.’

‘You were always poetic,’ he declared admiringly. ‘You were always a curious mixture of poetry and religion. I used to think that the two didn’t often go together. I fancied that if a woman was very poetic that meant the longing to dash herself against the bars of the cage—to try to break bounds, kick over the traces, and all that. But you were always so religious and self-restrained. I used to wonder at it, and I used to admire it, too, sometimes. But I tell you straight out that I did not properly appreciate you. Oh yes. I have not the slightest hesitation in admitting that. Now I see things quite differently, and I see what a fool I was not to have understood better, and I am madly in love with you again. Again? Oh, more than ever! Come, Clelia; I am not lost past redemption. Give me another chance! You will not be sorry for it; you will find that I am not altogether undeserving—you will indeed.’

‘Merciful Heaven!’ she murmured in an agony of per-

plexity. 'If I could only believe that there was anything true in all this!'

'You can believe it; you must believe it; you shall believe it!'

He made a movement towards her. She drew back from him.

'One moment,' she said. 'Frank'—for the first time she called him by his name, and a thrill of pride and joy passed through him as he heard the word.

'By Jove! I have triumphed,' he thought, and his eyes lighted with all the fire of success.

Her heart, indeed, was melting towards him; and not so much towards him as towards the possible thought that she might yet help to make him happy; to make him a better man—to redeem him, as he put it himself. And yet it seemed as if she could not trust him. She had been deceived so often before.

'Frank,' she said again, 'I don't want to bring up old stories; it would be of no use to either of us to go over such things. But I do know that many of your troubles——'

'You may call them by a harsher name,' he said in a submissive tone, 'if you like.'

'Why should I? What good would that do? Well, what I was going to say was this: you suffered much from want of money——'

'Yes, didn't I? I loved to be happy, and to make people happy——'

'Well, well,' she broke in rather impatiently, because somehow that was not exactly the impression of his nature which remained upon her mind. 'What I was going to say was this.'

She seemed to have great difficulty in saying it. She

looked at the carpet; she glanced up to the ceiling. Her struggling voice would not come. Francis Rose listened with eagerness and wondering expectancy.

‘I was very poor,’ she began, and then she stopped again.

‘What did that matter to me?’ he asked heroically, still very eager. ‘I knew you were poor when I asked you to be my wife.’—‘What is coming?’ he wondered. ‘These women are so odd.’

‘Yes; but men don’t always quite appreciate the sacrifice they are going to make.’ She could not help remembering how often her want of money had been flung in her face—how often her husband had told her that she was under an immense obligation to him for having condescended to marry ‘a beggar-girl.’ Her face almost crimsoned for a moment, but she resolutely put all such thoughts away. ‘What I want to say is this,’ she went on: ‘I am not poor now. A kind and dear friend whom I have lost’—and the tears came into her eyes at the thought—‘has divided her fortune between her daughter and me. It was a large fortune undivided. It is a large fortune for me. It is riches for me when I take my share. I did not want it, but they would insist on it.’

Half unconsciously she turned her eyes upon his face and studied his expression. Had he been less self-controlled, less skilled in moulding the mask of his face, she might have found him out once more. But, utterly surprised as he was, wildly delighted as he was, eager for a reconciliation as he was, he did not allow any gleam of joy to light up under his pince-nez. He only said:

‘I am glad, if it will help to make you happy; but I am not thinking of your money—I am thinking of yourself.’—‘I wonder how will that do?’ he thought at that critical moment.

‘What I want to say is this,’ she began once again with what she wanted to say. ‘I want to say that I should like you to share—the money with me. Oh, I should be so glad to give it! It might make you happy; and there would be enough—far more than enough—for me; and even to leave me with the means of doing some good if it came in my way.’

‘Thank you,’ he said quite coldly. ‘I ask you for your love, and you offer me half your money——’

‘Oh, as much as you like—as much as you will have,’ she interrupted.

‘Thank you again. I ask for bread, and you give me a stone! I want you. I claim your forgiveness, and—well—your love; and you offer to divide your money with me! Thank you, Lady Rose; no, I don’t want your money. I have enough for myself. I have come in for what property there is in the old place, and as I have never hitherto had much to do with it, it has not been particularly encumbered, and I propose to live a life worthy of a man who is head of the house of the Northumbrian Roses. I shall live like a gentleman again, as my ancestors did—as I might have done myself if it had not been for want of money and too much temptation. I am glad to hear that you are well cared for, Rosita; but I did not come to talk about your money. I came to talk about yourself and your love. Come, Rosita, do try to understand that years and trials and ill-luck—yes, and lately good luck—may alter a man! Responsibility alters a man. I am now the head of my house.’

A sudden outburst of passion flamed through her. Something in his melodramatic tone shocked her. She could not believe in him. She was furious with herself for having gone even for a moment near to believing in him.

‘Responsibility will not alter you!’ she exclaimed vehemently; and he drew back, surprised for the moment at her unexpected display of fierce emotion. ‘You will never be anything other than what you were and what you are. You are play-acting at this very moment——’

‘So I am, by Jove!’ he thought to himself. ‘How confoundedly clever she is!’

‘Play-acting, play-acting! There was never any reality about you for good or ill; there was never any real Francis Rose—but only a play-actor and a mummer!’

He drew back as if he had been struck in the face.

‘No more play-acting and mumming, my lady,’ he said in a stern voice. ‘You shall find that I am terribly in earnest this time. I’ll conquer you! I’ll tame you—take my word for that!’

‘You’ll never make me care for you——’

‘I don’t mind about that; I’ll bring you to your knees before me——’

She made a scornful gesture.

‘Yes, I will. You shall be my wife again.’

‘Never!’ she said more gently—more gently perhaps because her mind was all made up by this time.

‘Just wait and see. I’ll pass you under the yoke. I’ll be a kind husband to you; but there shall be no petticoat government in my house! You shall shed many a tear for this; but I’ll make a good wife of you. So I bid you good-bye for the present; but I’ll come again when, where, and how you least expect.’

‘Stay a moment,’ she said quietly, although with trembling lips and limbs. ‘Once again I make you my offer: you shall have as much of my money as you like to take.’

‘Thank you. I shall have you and your money, both, when I choose to take them.’

‘You forget,’ she said contemptuously, ‘that we are living in a civilized country. There are laws in England to protect even women.’

‘Not to protect mutinous wives,’ he said, with a mocking laugh, as he was turning to go.

‘One can leave England,’ she said.

‘You can leave England,’ he replied, ‘but you cannot leave me. You can’t shake me off now that I am in love with you again, and am determined that you shall be my wife again. I have ways of finding out things, and I shall find you out wherever you go and wherever you are. Good-bye for the moment. We shall meet again soon.’

Then, with a manner once more composed, he left her.

She sat down and covered her face with her hands, and the immediate strain being relaxed, she found her woman’s relief in a burst of tears. She was glad he could not see her then.

CHAPTER XX.

‘THY KINDNESS FREEZES.’

SIR FRANCIS dined alone that evening at the Voyagers’ Club. He avoided seeing Conrad or anyone; he wanted to be alone for a time at least, and to think things over. All the day he had been treading on air. It seemed to him as if he must have a sort of halo of happiness round his head. He felt supremely happy; he had a cluster of new sensations with which to make his life very well worth living. The determination to recapture his wife was a positive delight to him.

‘She shall fall in love with me yet—by Jove! she shall. I’ll woo her as the lion woos his bride. She’ll think all

the better of me for it. I understand a woman like that. How her eyes flashed! By Jove! what a triumph to recapture such a woman!

All this he kept saying to himself and thinking over and over again. What a woman to sit at the head of one's table and entertain with, he thought; for he had got a new ambition now. He had long been a social outlaw; now he yearned, above all things, to reconquer West End society. He had voluntarily dragged his name and his family down into the dust in many countries; but all the time he had been vain of his birth, even while, with deliberate cynicism, he degraded and debased it. For he was, as Clelia had said, and as he admitted frankly to himself when she said it, always a play-actor. He was always playing a part; he had played the part of the betrayer more for the sake of playing the part than for the sensuous pleasure of the betrayal; he had played the part of the loving husband, and he had played the part of the cynical, brutal husband; now it would be his happiness to be a leader of society, with a charming wife to manage things for him.

‘That's how we do it!’ he said to himself exultingly, in the slang of our day.

But after he had dined he felt that he wanted to talk over the whole subject, and there was nobody with whom he could talk it over freely except the faithful Waley. Moreover, he had certain ideas, at present only seething in his head, which he hoped that the faithful Waley might help him to put into bodily shape, and even into bodily action.

So he sent a messenger to the faithful Waley's lodgings to ask Waley to come to him as quickly as he could. He knew that Waley's habits were methodical, and that after

ten or half-past ten at night he might be counted on until any hour of the morning.

About eleven o'clock Sir Francis was smoking in the quiet recess which has been more than once described in this story, and, if we may say so, in another story as well.

Then Mr. Waley quietly appeared upon the scene.

'Just got your message, chief, and so I came along.'

'All right, Waley; glad to see you.'

'Nothing very serious, I hope?' Waley asked anxiously.

Sir Francis looked upstairs and downstairs. There was nobody near; save for the reading-rooms and smoking-rooms, the club was empty.

'Waley, I have made a fool of myself!'

'What, again?' Waley asked, with a broad grin.

'Yes, again. No, by Jove! I don't think I have, but I was very near doing it—I all but did it; and then it turns out that I didn't, after all. Look here, Waley: I've struck it again.'

'You generally do strike it, Waley said, 'wherever you strike at all; so I'm not much surprised. But would you mind telling us a little about it?'

'Yes, of course I'll tell you—first of all, how I was near making a fool of myself. Waley, I have seen my wife!'

'Not really?' Waley asked, with a manner of comparative indifference.

'Yes, I did! I saw her for the first time a few days ago; I mean, of course, for the first time since we fell out—separated—all that, you know.'

'Yes, I hold on to your meaning. Go ahead.'

'Well, I saw her by chance a few days ago. Did I tell you? No? I dare say I meant to tell you, but I forgot all about it.'

'All right,' Waley observed, not caring much either way.

‘Waley, I saw her again to-day!’

‘Did you really? Well?’

‘Well, listen to me, Waley. I have fallen madly in love with her!’

‘Oh, come now,’ Waley protested.

‘Yes, but I have, though. I can’t imagine how I ever came to think that stupid little brute of a girl could be worth causing her a moment’s pain! I am madly in love with her, Waley—only fancy! madly in love with my own wife! What do you think of that?’

‘Does seem odd, don’t it?’ Waley asked, not, however, without a smile of something like gratification expanding over his not unhandsome face.

‘Yes; she is bewitching—she is divine! I can’t tell you how I felt at meeting her again!’

‘I know how I should feel if I were to meet my wife again,’ Waley said; ‘and I rather think I know how she would feel, too!’

‘Yes; but, then, your wife, my excellent Waley, was no doubt a worthy and deserving woman, but mine is a goddess.’

‘Half a second, please. Some time in finding it out, weren’t you?’

‘I was, Waley! We are strange beings—some of us! I did not know that I had loved her so much——’

‘No; I never heard you say so at any time before——’

‘How could I say it, Waley? I didn’t know it myself——’

‘Ah yes, there it is, you see! Still, I’m pleased that you have found it out at last. But I don’t see how you have made a fool of yourself unless you propose to give up everything else, and tie yourself on to your wife’s petticoat-tail like somebody in the play—Antony, wasn’t it? No, I believe she wasn’t quite exactly his wife; but the notion is the same, don’t you know.’

‘How I was near making a fool of myself was this,’ Rose answered gravely and slowly. ‘I fell so suddenly dead in love with her that I begged and prayed of her to take me back again—yes, I did! And I thought all the time that she hadn’t a penny of money! You know my way—it was a thrilling sensation to me, the thought of capturing her again—and she might have had me back to her there as she stood!’

‘For how long?’ Waley curtly asked.

‘For how long? Oh, well, that is not quite to the point. Still, judging by my present sensations, I should say for ever and ever——’

‘Present sensations!’ Waley interposed, with the accent on the ‘present.’

‘My excellent good Waley, who can know about the sensations of the future? Have we the divine gift of prophecy, you and I?’

‘About some things, I almost think I have,’ Waley said, with a twinkle in his eye.

‘Oh, but come, look here—we are rather wandering away from the point. This is how I was near making a fool of myself. Now let us see how, after all, I didn’t.’

‘Yes, I rather want to come to that.’

‘There is an absence of the poetic about you, Waley, which I sometimes am inclined to deplore.’

‘Oh, Lord! there is an absence of all sorts of good things about me which somebody is always deploring. I have heard my wife make many a deploring of that kind, and I dare say she was quite right, poor old dear!’

‘She was quite right,’ Rose said decisively. ‘But we were not talking about her. We were talking about my being very near to making a fool of myself, and not making a fool of myself, after all.’

‘Right you are.’

‘Well, here it is. My wife is an heiress, and I never knew it until to-day.’

‘By Jove! you don’t mean that?’ Mr. Waley exclaimed, with a suddenly kindling interest.

‘Yes, she is indeed! She has been left a whole lot of money, and she offered to give me half of it, or more than half, if I liked.’

‘Come! that is good business,’ Waley declared, with lighting eyes; ‘and you take it, of course?’

‘Take it, my dear Waley? How little you understand such a woman as that.’

‘Well, but tell us——’

‘Why, of course, I rejected it with a lofty disdain.’

‘Well, I never!’

‘Don’t you see that that is the very way to charm a woman like that?’

‘You see, I haven’t had the pleasure of knowing her.’

‘You may take her on my description. That is the very way to get her back. I mounted the high horse—the heroic horse—at once! I declared that I scorned her money, and that I only wanted her love. And see here, Waley, I’ll have both. I am madly in love with her! I want her money—of course I want her money—but I am in love with her as I never was before. She must come back to me. Waley, if she does not consent, I’ll carry her off by force! I will! You shall help me, Waley!’

‘Oh! I’ll help you in anything fast enough; and, of course, the wife belongs to her husband, and he may carry her off whenever he likes. I suppose that’s as good law as they make. But I don’t think we often hear of husbands carrying off their own wives much in our day—

I mean, when the husbands have already dropped the good ladies down for a considerable time.'

'Well, if she won't come by smooth ways she shall by rough! If she won't come by fair ways she shall by foul! Do you know, Waley, I feel already thrilled by this new sensation! It makes life worth living. I was just beginning to find life growing a little dull and monotonous. My life was getting to be as colourless as a subterranean stream——'

'I've been in the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky,' Mr. Waley interjected, with what seemed to him sufficient appositeness. 'The fishes there are all blind, because they don't want any eyes. What would be the good of eyes where they couldn't see?'

'I want eyes,' Sir Francis exclaimed enthusiastically, 'if only to look on her! Waley, you shall see her!'

'Delighted, I am sure.'

'I am afraid you don't think me quite in earnest, Waley. But I am—this time I am. I shall have her back, and then, of course, I shall have the money too. What a wonderful stroke of luck! I wasn't thinking about money, I was only in love with her, and suddenly she turns round and offers me half of her fortune, or more if I want it. Waley, don't you think it is enough to make a man believe in what we read, in good books, you know, about conjugal love, and virtue, and all that? Doesn't it really seem as if virtue was to be rewarded in my own case? I fell in love with my wife—absolutely fell in love with her—with my own wife—and for her own sake absolutely, absolutely for her own sake! Well, a man ought to fall in love with his wife, ought he not?'

'If he hasn't done it before, yes, certainly,' Waley said, in the tone of an oracle.

‘Or if, having once fallen in love with her before, he has somehow happened to fall out of love with her, is it not his duty to fall in love with her again?’

‘Half a second, Sir Francis;’ and the right thumb and forefinger came together. ‘I am not much of an authority on people’s duties, but I should say it certainly was,’ Waley answered somewhat grimly.

He was not overjoyed at the appearance of a woman on their somewhat venturesome and enterprising stage. He did not want the chief to become too soft-hearted and domestic, and yet he had always had an uneasy consciousness that somehow the chief’s wife had not been altogether well treated.

‘Well, then, you see, I was fulfilling my duty all because of love, and here is the reward of the fulfilment of duty! Do you know, Waley, it ought to be enough to give a man a new impulse towards the good. It might inspire one towards the leading of a better life.’

‘What, the chance of getting the money?’

‘No, no! how can you be so material? The fact that the chance of getting the money came after the resolve to win back her love. Don’t you see, Waley? Good heavens, man! how can you be so dull as not to see?’

‘I’m a dull man naturally,’ Waley said, with a broad, good-humoured smile. ‘I can’t help myself. Nature made me.’

‘Nature didn’t make you dull; you are not dull—you are nothing of the kind. You can get at an idea often much quicker than I can. How can you be so dull in this case? Look here, I’ll go over it all again. I have neglected my wife. I have deserted her. Good——’

‘Bad, I should call it,’ said the prosaic Waley.

‘Yes, yes; in that sense I admit, of course. But, then,

take what comes next. I repent, I determine to reform, I seek out my wife, I tell her I am sorry for what I have done, I tell her I am in love with her more than ever; I ask her to forgive me, to take me back, to reform me, to regenerate me; and then I find out, to my utter surprise, that she has a lot of money about which I never heard! Does that not strike you, Waley, as if virtue were really made its own reward, as if the powers above had marked out my future for me?"

'I am afraid I don't see it—quite.'

'My dear Waley, I am afraid you are rather a sceptic.'

'Don't think I altogether know what a sceptic is; but in this case I suppose the young woman would have come in for the fortune whether you had fallen in love with her again or not.'

'You don't understand me,' Sir Francis said, in a tone of disappointed feeling. 'I suppose it would be of no use my trying to make you understand me on a question like that.'

'We generally understand each other pretty well—don't we, chief?' Waley asked in a somewhat puzzled and almost querulous voice.

'We do—we do; but on points of feelings, the higher sentiments, perhaps we don't always quite hit it off——'

'Oh, very like,' interrupted the downright Waley. 'I'm not much on the higher sentiments. But just tell me what you mean to do, and how I can help you, and I'll do all I can.'

'But I haven't quite thought it out yet, Waley. I don't quite see my way yet. You see,' he added somewhat fretfully, 'I generally get hold of an idea myself, and then I pass it on to you to work it into action for me. But I can't well do that in this case, can I, Waley?'

‘Oh, by Jupiter, no!’ Waley promptly replied. ‘I haven’t the least idea of what ought to be done in this case. When it comes to a question between husband and wife, then I’m about the worst chap in the world to be able to give advice that’s worth the having.’

‘Well, I must think it over,’ Sir Francis said, somewhat tartly.

He had got the idea into his head that there was a faint note of mutiny or of something approaching to it in Waley’s voice. He did not like that. He had been for a long time accustomed to rely on Waley’s promptings in everything. He had always relied implicitly and unquestioningly on himself to find out what he wanted to have done; but he had always relied on Waley to suggest the way by which the object might be gained or the enterprise worked out. Now that he had set his heart upon this new enterprise, he found nothing suggestive, or even responsive, about Waley’s tone and manner.

There was a certain artistic or æsthetic—æsthetic in the old sense of the word—sensitiveness in Rose’s nature and nerves that often enabled him to scent out from far off the evidences of a coming danger as ‘the leaves of the shrinking mimosa’ are said to feel far in advance the tramp of the horse’s feet on the prairie.

So now Rose appeared to foretell the coming of a crisis, when Waley would not work with him quite as cordially as he had always worked before. He had known that Waley had a strong objection to the intrusion of a woman into any of the common enterprises of himself and his chief. But he had known, too—and it was of much greater importance to him now—that despite Waley’s quarrel with his own wife, and his separation from her, and his relief at getting rid of her, there was a curious

vein of compassionate tenderness to women deep down in Waley's odd nature, and that he would be likely enough to insist that men must play the straight game with women, whatever they did.

Rose told himself again and again—was telling himself as he sat there talking with Waley—that he meant to play the straightest game with Clelia Rose that ever could be played. He simply meant to make his wife—his own lawful wife—fall in love with him again, and come back to him again. There was nothing in his proposal, in his enterprise, of which pale-lipped morality itself could disapprove. On the contrary, it was the very thing which the palest-lipped morality ought to go earnestly in for. Now, as Rose well knew, his devoted Waley did not by any means go in for pale-lipped morality. On the contrary, Waley had done, or sanctioned, many things over which—to use Carlyle's phrase—'moralities not a few must shriek aloud.' But, still, Rose had always been conscious in an oblique kind of way that there were sentimental weaknesses in Waley of which he himself could render no account to his conscience.

When Rose wanted a thing done for his own purpose, that purpose became the guide of his conscience; other guiding light he had none, and wanted none. But he had noticed in his faithful henchman a sort of conscience which naturally and at the first modelled itself on the conscience of the chief, and yet which might possibly be roused into vague doubt, and then into downright question.

Sir Francis Rose felt towards Waley this night—he could not quite tell why—a little in the mood of Shakespeare's King Richard towards Buckingham when he makes a secret proposal, and meets with no genial response.

‘Tut, tut, thou art all ice—thy kindness freezes!’ Sir Francis Rose thought the kindness of Waley was somewhat frozen that night, and the idea gave him food for contemplation. Perhaps he was wrong, he said to himself. Waley was very friendly and comradelike, but his kindness did somehow seem to freeze.

CHAPTER XXI.

‘WHY SUMMON HIM—AND TRUST NOT ME?’

THE faithful Waley was looking out of the windows of the red flat near Berkeley Square one evening about seven, a few nights after the evening when we saw him last. He was somewhat puzzled in mood. He had not been quite able to account for the manner of the chief these few days past. He did not by any means approve of the ‘petticoat interest’ which to all appearance the chief had lately been determined to import into the dramatic fiction of the lives of the little confederacy.

Waley had a sort of superstition on the subject. It amounted to this: They three, Sir Francis, Waley himself, and Marmaduke Coffin—poor, good, absurd old Coffin!—had all been equally unlucky in their married lives. No flitch of bacon could be won by any of them in any conceivable Dunmow festival. Why, then, transport the ill-luck along with them? Why take up with it again voluntarily and unsought? Why run out of one’s way to get hold of it? Waley had probably never heard of Hogarth’s sign representing ‘The Man loaded with Mischief,’ which used to hang in Oxford Street up to quite recent years. The Man loaded with Mischief had his

wife seated on his shoulders. To Mr. Waley's mind, a man was loaded with mischief who had his wife or any other woman on his shoulders.

Suddenly a cab stopped at the door, and Marmaduke Coffin stepped cautiously out. There was a dispute about the cab-fare, and then Coffin crossed the pavement. He glanced quickly, quietly, either way before he rang the bell at the door.

There was something very peculiar about the walk of Mr. Marmaduke Coffin. The front of the foot—the toes—seemed to take a sudden and strong grip of the earth. They held on to it, and relaxed the grip but slowly and cautiously. No matter how quick the pace of the moving man, the same peculiarity could be noticed in the movement. That is, it could be noticed by anybody who had an eye for noticing anything. Nine out of every ten people have not such an eye. To them nothing is peculiar—it is all as by lot, God wot. But anybody who had an eye a little better instructed would have noticed the peculiar movement of Mr. Marmaduke Coffin's walk.

The same peculiarity might be traced in the movement of the beasts whom the noble savage pursues, and in the movement of the noble savage himself. The instinct in each case is that of not going too far in either direction to be able to turn and wind with a single throb and impulse of will. Put as much force as you fairly can on the impulse; but, all the same, catch the earth, and grip it so that you may be ready to turn and wind at any moment with all your full strength, all your full speed. That is really the foundation and secret of this peculiarity of movement. It was a secret which showed itself in the step of Marmaduke Coffin. But it made no impression whatever on the unimaginative and uninquiring mind of

Mr. Albert Edward Waley. Mr. Waley had not many friendships, but when he did make a friendship he generally took it for granted.

Waley himself promptly opened the door of the flat.

‘Hello, my noble sportsman!’ Waley exclaimed. ‘So you have come over, have you?’

‘Did you expect that I was not going to come over, Mr. Waley?’ Coffin mildly asked.

‘Oh no, Coffin; I knew you would come, old boy, and that was only my way of welcoming you—see?’

‘I am sure you meant it well, Mr. Waley.’

‘Why, of course I did, Coffin. What else on earth should I have meant it for? But now that you have come, do you know what you have come for?’

‘No, I don’t, Mr. Waley; but I make no doubt you can tell me.’

‘I? Not a bit of it, old man. But you really don’t know?’

‘I don’t know anything. I got your letter——’

‘Yes, yes, of course.’

‘And then I came.’

‘And then you came—and that’s all?’

‘That’s all, Mr. Waley. I wait for further details, as they say in the newspapers.’

‘Do they?’ Mr. Waley asked somewhat distractedly. ‘I hadn’t noticed.’

‘Do they—what?’ Mr. Coffin asked, a little out of tune with the latest question.

‘Oh, well’—Mr. Waley pulled himself a little together—‘I wasn’t quite thinking of what the newspapers say, or about the further details they may find it necessary to wait for. What I wanted to ask was whether the chief hadn’t given you any hint about the business for which he brought you over here.’

‘No, Mr. Waley; I didn’t ask him any questions.’

‘Why, of course you did not,’ Waley exclaimed earnestly. ‘He knows what is best; he knows what he wants done. I don’t ask him any questions, I can tell you. But I thought perhaps he might have let you know what he was bringing you over to London for, and told you to tell me.’

‘No, Mr. Waley,’ Coffin answered, with all the quietude of self-conscious honesty; ‘he told me nothing at all.’

‘And he didn’t even tell you to ask me?’

‘No, Mr. Waley, he didn’t.’

‘All right,’ Waley said, in restored good spirits; ‘he’ll tell me when the right time comes. He said that he would, and of course he will.’

Marmaduke Coffin let his eyes fall on the carpet as he heard these words from Mr. Waley. It had appeared to his mind as if he must have been summoned over from Paris to London on some very peculiar business. He had certainly counted when he came over on finding Waley in the full secret, and on receiving instructions from him; but it did not take him long to get hold of the fact that he was brought over to London for business which, so far at least, had been kept out of the knowledge of Albert Edward Waley. This was to him like a note of coming promotion. We all know what a trouble it is when any service is clogged by a lack of promotion. We have had to make rules about this in the army and the Civil Service of our country, by virtue of which some of the grandest triumphs that were accomplished for the State in other days could not be accomplished for the State in our days.

This we call progress. Now, there were no such rules, to be sure, in the service to which Mr. Marmaduke Coffin had devoted himself, and he well knew that he might go on until the age of ninety-five, should he live so long,

without receiving any promotion, if any other man could do the work he was wanted for better than he could. So he felt a thrill of pride and hope and joy when he heard that he had been called over from Paris to undertake some business about which as yet Mr. Waley had not even been consulted. Mr. Waley, on the other hand, felt a little put out by the fact that he had not been consulted, but his loyal heart was easily satisfied by the assurance that he would be allowed to know in good time, and that it would all come out right.

There was a silence for some seconds. Then Coffin spoke in his laconic, monosyllabic sort of way.

‘Chief not in?’

‘No, he’s not in now; if he were, I shouldn’t have kept you waiting all this time, Coffin, old boy.’

‘In—when?’

‘He didn’t say, my sententious youth. Didn’t say a word to me about expecting you this morning, or waiting in for you; but I think you had better wait a little here. I think he is dining with some chaps at the Voyagers’, and it’s very likely he’ll want to see you later on.’

‘Thank you, Mr. Waley, I’ll wait. My time is his.’

‘All right, old man; so is mine. Well, tell me all the news from Paris. Not the fashionable news, Coffin. I know you ain’t just the sort of man to take an interest in the news that would suit the *Ladies’ Pictorial*.’

Just at that moment the sharp ring of a telegraph messenger was heard at the door. Waley jumped up.

‘Excuse me a moment, Coffin,’ he said breathlessly. ‘I always like to take in these messages myself when I get the chance.’

‘Right,’ said the sententious Coffin.

In a moment Waley was back, looking a little crestfallen.

‘It’s a telegram for you, Coffin,’ he said blankly.

Coffin took it and opened it with his usual air of melancholy indifference to events of life, strokes of fate, sudden inrushes of good luck, and all the rest.

‘Chief wants me at the Voyagers’ at ten-thirty,’ he said concisely.

‘Oh, he does ; all right,’ Waley murmured.

‘Then I needn’t wait here any longer?’ Coffin asked.

‘Don’t see any necessity. Don’t give yourself up too much to the pleasures of the capital, Coffin. You are a rare old boy, I know, for the pleasures of the capital.’

‘I’ll go and get shaved,’ said Coffin. ‘Some of the shops in Bond Street don’t close until eight. Just half-past seven now.’

‘Until ten-thirty your time is your own,’ Waley said.

‘Use it, and don’t abuse it, old chap.’

‘Thanks,’ Coffin replied ; and he vanished from the room with his peculiar tread—the movement of one who felt that he might find enemies and dangers and pitfalls and snares anywhere along his way.

‘Rum chap, Coffin!’ Waley murmured to himself. ‘Wonder if he really likes anyone? Think he does like the chief. Don’t think he likes me. Wonder if he hates most people, and would do them an ill turn—or is it only his manner? People have such odd sorts of manners sometimes.’

His reflections were cut short by hearing a latchkey turn in the front-door. The chief, he thought. He must have met Coffin on the stairs.

Sir Francis Rose came in. He was not looking quite so bright and airy as usual. A shade of embarrassment, and even of sombreness, was over him. He saluted Waley with an air of indifference.

‘Ho, Waley!’ was all he said.

‘You expected me, chief, didn’t you?’ Waley asked.

‘Expected you? Oh yes; of course I did.’

‘Did you meet Coffin? He has been here.’

The chief contracted his eyebrows, and a curious light flashed from under them.

‘Yes; I met Coffin. It’s all right,’ he replied.

‘You don’t want me just now?’

Waley rose to his feet.

‘Just now? Yes, I do. I have time enough yet. Sit down.’

The obedient Waley sat down, and waited silently for the next words of his chief.

‘Look here, Waley: you must get this young fellow off as fast as possible to Patagonia, or somewhere else. The sooner the better.’

‘What young fellow?’ Waley asked in some surprise.

They had not been talking of any young fellow. It has been already mentioned more than once that Mr. Waley’s many excellent qualities did not include much imaginative faculty, or much gift of what may be called dramatic insight into the feelings and the preoccupations of the minds of other human beings. He had not for the moment the slightest idea of what his chief was thinking or talking about.

‘This young fellow, Jim Conrad. He is rather in the way here just now, and I want him out of the way.’

‘Oh,’ Mr. Waley said reflectively, ‘I dare say that will be easy enough.’

‘All right. I am very glad.’

‘Yes; that ought to be easy work. My idea is that he will be only too glad to get away anywhere, and the farther away the better.’

‘Good,’ Sir Francis said, turning in his chair contentedly. ‘Then, get him away, Waley, there’s a good chap.’

‘Fact is,’ Waley said confidently, ‘there’s something wrong with the poor lad. I fancy it must be the old story.’

‘What old story?’

‘Well, isn’t there something that people always say about *cherchez la femme*?’

‘Yes. How is that? What do you mean?’ Rose asked sharply, and with suddenly-contracting eyebrows.

‘I have long had it in my mind,’ Waley answered slowly and gravely, ‘that some woman is at the bottom of the whole affair. He is in love with some girl who won’t have him or can’t have him, and he wants to go away anywhere out of the whole business. When a young chap like that is crossed in love, he always wants to go away somewhere out of civilization. Lord bless you! I have been like that myself in my younger days. You don’t know much about it, chief, I dare say, for the women have generally done the love-making for you. But I can see his case with half an eye.’

Rose looked keenly again at Waley. Could it possibly be that Waley knew anything or suspected anything of the real state of affairs? But Waley’s expression was one of utter simplicity and innocence.

‘Odd thing!’ Mr. Waley went on in a sort of philosophical study of life and the ways of men. ‘Odd phrase that, being crossed in love! Now, I have long been of opinion that the real cross in love is where the girl is willing to have you. By Jove! what becomes of the love then? How soon it all melts away! But he don’t think that just now, bless you! Yes; I fancy I shall not have much difficulty in getting him off to Patagonia.’

Sir Francis flung himself back in his chair. Every word

that Waley was saying made him only the more convinced that Conrad would not go to Patagonia just now. He felt a passion of hatred and jealousy rising in his mind against Jim Conrad. But it would have been an unspeakable torture to his vanity and his self-love to know that Waley suspected anything of the feelings that were thrilling through his heart. To Waley he must always seem the conquering hero among women—the irresistible Don Juan—the wrecker of female hearts. It would be a pitiful come-down for him if his devoted follower were to find out that Sir Francis Rose could be jealous of any man—especially on account of Sir Francis Rose’s own wife. He hastened to assume a tone of less keen interest in the matter.

‘Well, get him away as soon as you can, Waley. Of course, I need not tell you to make good use of him. He might be made of great service to us in some business or other.’

‘Oh, you trust me to turn him to good account. He’s a clever young fellow, and a plucky young fellow, and we’ll put him on for all he’s worth—you may depend upon that.’

‘I can depend upon you for anything, Waley—I know that quite well.’

‘So you can,’ said the gratified Waley. ‘I’ll soon find something for him to do. I have taken, somehow, a great fancy for the lad.’

‘Yes; he’s a very good fellow,’ Rose said, with an air of indifference. ‘Where are you off to, Waley?’

Waley had not had any intention of going off anywhere just then; but he took the hint and got up.

‘Do you want me to come to you at the Voyagers’ later on?’ Waley asked.

‘Voyagers’? No, I think not; I don’t think I need trouble you.’

‘Coffin is coming, ain’t he?’

‘Coffin? Oh yes, Coffin is coming, by the way. Yes, yes, so he is. But I need not trouble you—just yet, at all events.’

‘All right,’ said the obedient Waley; and he took his leave. But he was thinking to himself as he went out of the room. ‘Can’t make out the chief these last few days,’ he was saying to himself. ‘He promised me I should know everything, and so far I don’t know anything. And Coffin is to see him to-night, and I am not to see him. Odd! He says he don’t want to trouble me; but, by Jove! it troubles me a good deal to be left out of the swim in all this.’

Suddenly he heard the voice of his chief calling after him. His mind brightened as he ran quickly back.

‘I am to go to the Voyagers’, after all,’ he said to himself.

‘Oh, it’s only this, Waley. I don’t think I shall be at home all day to-morrow, and it isn’t worth while giving you the trouble of coming here. Good-night.’

‘What a lot of scruple about giving me trouble!’ Waley said to his own heart. ‘Something new, all this awful care about not giving me trouble!’ He lighted another cigar as he stood on the threshold. ‘It’s awfully early,’ he thought. ‘I don’t quite well know what to do with myself.’

CHAPTER XXII.

WHAT MR. WALEY DID WITH HIMSELF.

WALEY wandered forth into the evening air, his mind filled with all manner of vague, inarticulate thoughts. Something had happened, he could not help thinking—something which was to alter the course of his life. He did not

know what it was or what it could be; but the words which his chief had lately spoken kept ringing in his ears and in his memory.

‘Epoch-making days!’

He had not thought of such a thing before. He had not realized any such idea, even when Sir Francis Rose had talked about the epoch-making days; but now, somehow, he began to find a problem and a study in it. Is it possible that this was to be an epoch-making day for him? Why had Marmaduke Coffin been summoned to a council from which he was to all appearance to be deliberately shut out?

He suddenly remembered that he had not yet had any dinner. He was so much accustomed to dine with the chief when they both had an evening to spend together, that he had not realized the fact that he was to dine alone on an evening when the chief was to see Marmaduke Coffin later on at the Voyagers’, and when he might have expected to dine with the chief, or, at least, to have a later appointment at the club.

‘Come,’ he said to himself cheerily; ‘I have not been enjoying myself much lately. I’ll go and have a good dinner somewhere, and then I’ll go and have a good laugh at one of the halls’—meaning thereby, of course, one of the music-halls. So, after a moment of deliberation, he called a hansom, and drove to the Café Royal in Regent Street. ‘Twill do me a lot of good,’ he said to himself, ‘and knock the cobwebs off me.’

He found a small table unoccupied at the Café Royal, and he ordered a nice little dinner and some champagne, and determined to start an evening’s enjoyment. And as he was waiting for his dinner, his eyes happened to fall upon a mirror in front of him, and in it he saw a weary, deeply-lined, haggard, and almost tragical face; and after

a second or two of wonder as to why anybody apparently in such a dismal mood should ever come into such a place of entertainment, he suddenly realized the fact that the face of the dismal Johnnie was his own countenance. He started a little, and then he said to himself :

‘Quite time to go to one of the halls and be made to laugh : something’s the matter with me.’

Then, as they were setting his soup before him, he saw another dismal face passing by him—a face as dismal as his own. And he recognised this other Knight of the Rueful Countenance, and he hailed him :

‘I say, Mr. Conrad, where are you going to ? come and sit here along o’ me.’

And Jim Conrad stopped, and Conrad’s melancholy phiz broke into a smile as he saw Waley, and Conrad sat down beside him with right goodwill, and ordered a dinner. And the pint of champagne was countermanded, and a goodly quart bottle was set upon the table.

‘You look as if you were down upon your luck,’ Waley observed by way of greeting to his friend.

‘I was just going to say the same of you,’ Conrad sympathetically observed, after he had settled down.

‘No ; were you really, now ? How very odd ! I’m so glad to have caught hold of you.’

‘Thanks. I’m very glad to have been caught hold of.’

The sound of Waley’s friendly voice was musical in the young man’s ears just then.

‘I’m rather inclined for a spree to-night,’ Waley said. ‘Have you anything on hand ? I had a sort of notion of going to one of the music-halls. I want to be set laughing. What do you say ?’

‘All right. I’ll go and laugh—if I can.’

The conversation languished. There was a long pause.

The two were alone at their table, quite away from the rest of the little world.

‘Have a pull at the fizz,’ Waley said.

‘Thanks,’ Conrad answered, and he finished a glass of champagne at a draught.

Still the talk, somehow, did not flow.

‘Anything the matter with you, old man?’ Waley asked after another interval, as he scanned with kindness his companion’s face.

‘I don’t know that there is anything very particular, or unexpected, at all events. But what about you?’

‘About me? Well, I don’t know.’

There was another pause, and the courses of the dinner went and came.

Then Waley suddenly said :

‘There was something the chief was saying to me the other day—and it did not quite take hold of me at the time—but now I begin to feel that it bit in: I can’t tell you the why and the wherefore, but there it is. It has caught on to me, somehow.’

‘Yes; what was it?’

‘Well, it was like this, don’t you know. The chief asked me, says he, “Don’t you find that there are some days which are epoch-making days?” Yes, I am sure those were his words, Conrad—may I call you Conrad?’

‘Oh yes, by all means; why not?’

‘We are friends, ain’t we?’

‘Yes, I hope so.’

‘I feel very friendly to you, anyhow.’

‘Well, and so do I to you,’ Conrad said, not without a half-note of impatience in his voice.

‘That’s all right. You are a man I know I can trust, and I tell you that you can trust me.’

‘You needn’t tell me. I do trust you.’

‘All right. What were we talking about?’

‘About what Rose called epoch-making days.’

‘Yes, yes—how did it pass for a moment out of my head? Well, he asked me if I didn’t find that some days seemed to be epoch-making days—when one felt that something was going to happen that might change the whole run of one’s life.’

‘Yes; and what did you say?’

‘Well, I said—like a fool, I suppose—that I hadn’t ever particularly noticed anything of the kind. Have you ever had any such ideas about any day that ever made an impression upon you?’

‘Yes, Waley, I have had such ideas.’

Jim’s mind went back at once to the day when he found his mystic ring, and he felt that that was indeed an epoch-making day in his life.

‘See that, now! I suppose it was want of education and book-reading and poetry, and all that sort of thing, in me; but, do you know, I never had any thought of the kind in my mind up to that time.’

‘Not up to that time? And now?’

‘Now I think I do begin to understand the feeling. I have a strong notion in my mind that these last few days mean something to me—something that may mean a big change in my life—only I don’t know what it is all about, or what is going to come of it. No, not the least little bit in the world.’

‘Why trouble yourself about it, Waley?’

‘Lord bless you! how do I know? I can’t help troubling myself about it. The feeling is there, don’t you know. I can’t get rid of it.’

Jim began to listen with some genuine interest to his

friend's vague outpouring as to his condition of mind. He had come to have a high opinion of Waley's robust and manly good sense, and he well knew that up to that time Waley's one central idea had been that of a spaniel-like devotion to his master. Whatever doubt or brooding was in his mind must, Jim felt assured, be a doubt or brooding on that subject. The doubt or the brooding coincided very curiously with certain doubts which had been springing up in Jim's own mind during the last few days. But he did not want to get any deeper into Waley's confidence than Waley was himself willing that he should penetrate. So he remained silent for a moment or two. Then Waley began again, as if with an effort to toss the whole subject away.

'Well, well,' he said, 'there's no use in making ourselves uncomfortable by talking over all that kind of gloomy thing now. You are right about that—why trouble ourselves? When the thing comes, whatever it is, we shall know all about it, eh? Look here, let's talk of something else. How about Patagonia?'

'About Patagonia? Yes, what about Patagonia?'

'When shall you be ready to go out there?'

Nothing had been farther from Jim's mind for many days than the idea of his going out to Patagonia just then.

'I don't quite understand what you want of me in Patagonia.'

'Well, if it comes to that, no more do I. But the chief is very keen about it.'

'What does he want me to do in Patagonia?'

'Oh, that, of course, he'll tell you. He always knows exactly what he wants. I can tell you enough to start you; when you are ready to go, he'll tell you all the rest.'

'Waley,' said Jim gravely, 'I have something to do in

London just now. When that is over, I am ready to go to Patagonia or any other part of the world as soon as you want me to go—the sooner the better for me.’

‘Will it take long?’ Waley asked in a low and kindly tone.

‘Will what take long?’

‘Oh, come! don’t you see—the thing that you want to settle.’

It occurred to Jim that it might take long indeed if he were to attempt a final settlement of that trouble—that it might admit of no final settlement—that the best efforts he could make might only tend to unsettlement. But he merely answered:

‘I can’t tell you just yet, Waley.’

‘The chief wants you to go at once—at once.’

‘Has he told you so?’

‘Told me so to-day.’

And even as Waley was speaking the thought went across his mind for the first time: ‘Why does the chief want this young fellow out of London?’ And then another flash of guesswork came on him, and he sat following its light in his uncouth sort of way, and there was silence again for a moment or two.

‘You’re in trouble, old pal, ain’t you?’ he began, in the kindest tone his voice could assume; ‘and I wonder if you might tell me what it is. I’m ever so much older than you, and I’ve knocked about the world twenty times more than you have. Could I help you at all?’

‘No, Waley—thanks, my dear fellow. I am afraid there is nothing to be done. And I am not sure that the world would call it a trouble of mine. Well, I couldn’t explain even if I had any right to explain; and I am not a very good hand at explanation, anyhow.’

‘Nobody is who feels a thing,’ Waley said sympathetically. ‘Why, I have a doubt and a trouble on my own mind just at this moment, and be hanged if I could explain them to myself, not to talk of explaining them to other folk. But your trouble—don’t think me rude or too curious—it is something about a woman, ain’t it, now?’

He put his big hand gently and kindly on Jim Conrad’s knee.

Jim winced a little, flushed a little, and then said manfully:

‘Yes, Waley, old man, I don’t mind confessing to you that much: it is about a woman. Don’t ask me any more.’

‘My dear boy, not another word. I’ve been through that sort of thing myself—lots of times. You say I can’t help you at all?’

Jim shook his head.

‘Could the chief help you?’

The question was put in perfect innocence, but it made Jim Conrad start and wince and grow red.

‘No—no—no!’ he said sharply. ‘I don’t care to talk about the matter any more, Waley.’

Now, the vague suspicion that had come up at first in Waley’s mind was an idea that Conrad might be in love with some girl, whose attractions had somehow got hold of the chief also. Waley firmly believed the chief to be irresistible in his love-making, and Waley’s general notions of women were drawn from experiences in which educated varieties of taste did not reckon for very much. Waley had accepted as a position governing all others the fact that the chief was irresistible to women. If he was irresistible to one woman, why not to all women? Was not that the common-sense of it? So he took it at once for granted that Jim Conrad’s trouble was simply because his

'mash,' as Waley would have called her, had taken it into her silly feminine head to fall in love with Sir Francis Rose. He spoke out on the spur of the moment—incautious to those whom he believed to be his friends, while cautious as a Red Indian to human beings of the outer range.

'I don't think you need have any trouble of mind about the chief in that way, Conrad, my son,' he said, with a genial, reassuring smile.

'In what way?' Jim asked, all amazed.

'Oh, well, don't you know, in that way. Look here, I'll tell you a secret, and of course you won't breathe a word of it to a mortal. It's this: the chief has fallen in love—with whom do you think?—you would never guess—with his own wife! Yes, sure as death! And I am confoundedly sorry for it, because it may spoil him for many a good enterprise. Oh, by Jove! these women—how they do come across us at every hand's turn! Yes, he's fallen in love with his own wife all over again, and he wants to get her back to him, and, I tell you, if he wants to get her back he'll get her back! I suppose, anyhow, it's better than falling in love with some woman who isn't his wife—more moral and all that. I say, old man, this ought to be good news for you, and yet somehow you don't look quite as if it was. I say, sit up and tell us what is the matter.'

Jim had indeed for the moment fallen quite out of time. He could hardly catch on at first to the train of ideas which Waley had in his mind when Waley endeavoured to reassure him by telling him that the chief had fallen in love again with the chief's own wife. Even still it was but a vague perception of the notion that came over him. That, however, was a poor and altogether secondary consideration. The one thought uppermost in

his mind was fixed upon Waley's declaration that Rose had again fallen in love with his wife, and was determined to get her back.

'I can't believe it, Waley,' he exclaimed. 'He doesn't care three straws about her. He deserted her; he cast her away; he flung her from him in her youth and her beauty; and—oh, good heavens! what am I talking about?'

'Blest if I know,' Waley said very gravely; while, for all his disclaimer of knowledge, a shrewd suspicion was beginning to creep in and to light its little glow-worm lamp, or firefly lamp, as it might be, in the dusk of uncertainty.

'Oh, that's the way,' he said to his own soul.

'Never mind, Waley,' Jim said hurriedly; 'let's not talk of this any more. I don't suppose I quite know what I am talking about. I say, did I drink too much of that champagne?'

'No, 'taint that,' Waley said in a kindly tone. 'Just look at the bottle, and help yourself again, and then pass it on. Don't you see?'

By this time Waley, with his natural shrewdness, pricked further on by the secrecy of the chief, had come to the conviction that something serious was being planned about which he had not been consulted, and was not to be consulted, and which threatened to be serious for Jim Conrad. The rights and the wrongs of the matter were wholly unknown to him; but he was very anxious to know something about them. Suddenly he started off on the track of blunt inquiry, and, having gulped down another glass of champagne, he burst out:

'I say, look here, old pal: you haven't been making love to the chief's wife, or anything of that kind, have you?'

Poor Jim's barrier of reserve quite broke down.

'I didn't know she was his wife,' he said—the conversation was carried on almost in a whisper—'I didn't know she was anybody's wife.'

'Oh, but you do know now?'

'Oh yes, I do know now; she told me.'

'What do you mean to do?'

'To save her from him, if I can. He's a brute and a beast and a scoundrel!'

'Look here, Conrad,' Waley interposed, not ungently; 'I can't stand hearing this said of the chief; it wouldn't be proper on my part, and I shan't.'

'All right,' Conrad replied; 'then you need not stand it. I shall leave you to yourself. Good-night.'

So Conrad started up from the table.

'Now, now, now!' Waley said soothingly. 'See how hot and hasty you young chaps are. Sit down again, Conrad, my son. By Jove! you might be a son of mine, so far as years go, anyhow. Look here: I am a good deal on your side of this business lately, although I know very little about it.'

'I can't tell you anything,' said Jim, sitting down again, however.

'Don't want you to tell me a word more than you feel at liberty to tell to a true friend, if my honourable friend will allow me so to call him,' Waley said, with a vague recollection of what he had heard now and then when he sat in one of the galleries of the House of Commons.

'Well, there,' Jim murmured: 'I was in love with her before I knew that she was married, and she had no reason to tell me her secret at first; but when she found out that I was in love with her—when I told her so, in fact—then she let me know that she was married, and that her

husband had deserted her, and that there could be nothing between us—between her and me—but only friendship, and that at a distance. Oh, good God! how I felt! I knew that her husband was a scoundrel, but I didn't know who he was.'

'Now, now! You only know one side of the story.'

'See here, Waley. Has he deserted his wife, or has he not?'

'Well, if you press me for an answer, I am afraid he has.'

'And, now, does he want to get her back?'

'Oh yes; I told you so. He has fallen madly in love with her all over again.'

'Yes. But does he know that she has lately come in for a large fortune—does he know that, Waley?'

'I am afraid he does know that—in fact, he told me so.'

'And is that the renewal of love?'

'Well, you see, the chief is a man of what people call a complex character. I suppose the money may have something to do with it.'

'Yes, I dare say,' Jim interjected grimly.

'I know—I know; but I don't think it has everything to do with it. I don't believe it's the money and nothing else. The chief is a sort of man who can't bear to be cut out of anything or left out of anything. So long as he had merely dropped the young woman, it didn't seem to matter much to him. Stay, now; I'm only putting the case from his point of view, and it's no use fussing. But, of course, when it came to his wanting to get hold of the young woman again, and she not wanting to be got hold of by him, why, that, don't you see, is another pair of shoes. Well, now, what do you propose to do? He is her husband, ain't he?'

'Unhappily, he is.'

‘He hasn’t lost any of his rights—he hasn’t deserted for long enough, has he?’

‘Unhappily, no.’

‘Very well. Then, where do you come in? You don’t want her to run away with you, now, do you?’

‘Waley, don’t talk in that infernal way. I wonder what she would say to me if I were to hint at such a thing.’

‘I know—I know,’ Waley said in a conciliatory tone, not meaning that he knew precisely what words the lady would use under such conditions, but that he knew she would say exactly what Jim Conrad assumed that she would be sure to say.

‘She isn’t like the women we meet in the world, Waley. I want you from the first—from the very first—to understand that.’

‘Yes, yes, of course—I quite understand that. The chief told me as much as that himself. He took it all upon himself—said it was all his own fault, and that he was not worthy of her—you know that sort of thing,’ Waley added, with the best purpose, but with, perhaps, a little want of tact.

‘She is the purest and the noblest woman that ever lived!’ Jim burst out again, and then shot an eager glance around him to make sure that nobody had heard him.

‘Yes, yes; of course she is—they all are,’ Waley said again with the kindest purpose, but again with a little want of tact. ‘But, you see, that only makes the difficulty all the greater. What do you propose to do? You know that she is married; you know that her husband is going to claim her again; you know that she is a woman who wouldn’t run away with you or anyone else. Then, what in the world do you propose to do?’

‘I’ll tell you what I propose to do, Waley. I am not such a fool as you suppose——’

‘Never said you were a fool of any sort, dear boy—never supposed it. Give you my word of honour.’

‘Doesn’t matter—doesn’t matter whether you did or not. What I want to do now is to get her free from him—if I can. If I feel sure that she is free from him, I shall be content never to see her again. Yes, I shall! I should be willing to enter into a bond never to see her again, never, never, in all my life, if only I could know that she was free from him. And to bring that about, Waley, I’ll do all that I can, and I tell you I shall think little of any possible danger to myself if I can secure that freedom for her.’

‘You are a good chap,’ Waley said slowly, ‘and I believe in my soul you mean all that you say. But how do you propose to get her away from him?’

‘She has friends,’ Jim answered. ‘She has one great friend—a woman—who will go to the farthest end of the earth with her. I shall help them to get away.’

‘You can’t. He will find them out. He will do anything when he has set his heart upon it.’

‘His heart! His heart! Has he any heart?’

‘Well, I thought he had once upon a time, and I hope he has still. I do believe, honest Injin, that he has set his heart upon her again. I do believe that he is really in love with her. He’s an awfully odd sort of man, but he’ll have his way.’

‘Waley,’ said Conrad, speaking in a low, suppressed tone, ‘sooner than that he should get hold of her again I’ll kill him.’

‘My good fellow,’ Waley answered, in the calmest voice, ‘if you come between him and any design of his, he is much more likely to kill you.’

Waley meant what he said. During all their talk he had been turning over in his mind some vague possibilities.

‘Let him, if he can,’ Conrad said. ‘I’ll see to that! If I am attacked from behind I can’t protect myself, and my life, like the life of everybody else, is at the mercy of any assassin. Why, there was a man killed not fifty yards from this very place last night, here in the West End of London! I can only take my chance of that. If anyone attacks me from the front, I fancy I can give a good account of myself and of him. But I’ll not let him get hold of her if I can help it. No, not if I were to kill him!’

‘Let us think this over,’ Waley said, ‘and talk it over another time, as soon as we can. I want to pass it all through my mind, do you see, and size it up, if I can, and see what it all comes to. We are talking of killing as if we were in some parts of the world where I have been, and where anybody who likes kills anybody he dislikes, and very few questions asked about the business afterwards. But I’ll look into the matter, and tell you what idea I get of it. It wants some cool thinking over. Of course, we keep all this to ourselves for the present?’

‘Of course—of course.’

‘Very good. I’ll let you know. I dare say you don’t feel much inclined for any of the halls to-night?’

‘Oh no; not I.’

‘No more do I. Let’s go.’

So they parted. Waley kept asking himself, as he wandered towards his lodgings:

‘Was it for this Coffin was brought over? Or for this and something else?’

He had had Sir Francis Rose’s own assurance that he meant to get hold of his wife by fair means or foul, and that idea at the time did not seem wholly to shock Waley’s moral sense, which, indeed, had stood a good deal of shocking already. But it was clear that, since he had

failed quite to fall in enthusiastically with his patron's ideas on this subject, he had been left somewhat out in the shade, and this very night he had noticed how the face of the chief grew dark when he spoke of the necessity of getting Conrad out of the way—to Patagonia, or anywhere else.

And now Coffin was on the scene, and Coffin had been summoned over in the first instance, and according to the usual fashion, through him, Waley; and now, behold, he was put aside, and Coffin was taken into lonely confidence. Was it that Coffin was summoned in the first instance to help in nothing but the carrying off of Rose's own wife—an enterprise in which Waley might possibly have been expected to assist? Was it possible that now his help might be required for a darker deed? Waley's much revolving mind brooded deeply over this possibility as he went his way through the flashing and clattering streets.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHAT THE CHIEF DID WITH HIMSELF.

WHILE all this conference was going on between Jim Conrad and Mr. Waley at the Café Royal, Sir Francis Rose was dining alone at the Voyagers' Club. He talked to nobody when he could avoid it; and the Voyagers' Club was rather a social, conversational, friendly, chatty little club—not at all like the monumental old-fashioned clubs of the Waterloo Place region, or the overcrowded and noisy 'caravanserais' of the Northumberland Avenue quarter. It was not, however, the humour of Sir Francis Rose to talk this night, and to those who approached him he soon made it clear that good-fellowship was not the

sort of thing he wanted then. He had a way of conveying his sentiments very clearly without drawing on any great store of eloquence, and the few who accosted him on this particular evening promptly recognised the fact that he wanted to be let alone. At the Voyagers' Club people did not mind that.

Almost everybody had now and then on his mind a new expedition or enterprise of some kind which had to be carefully thought out, and which would not be the better for even the friendliest interruption. So there was no fault found with Rose, and he was allowed to think undisturbed over his enterprise—whatever it might be.

Rose had just now a good deal to think over. There was new matter in his mind, and his mental balance was a little shaken by the novelty of emotion which he had allowed to take possession of him.

Love had since his very boyhood been a familiar, a welcome, a delightful disturber of his heart. But how about hate? Hate had not up to this counted for much in the self-centred nature of Francis Rose. He had, of course, in his varied career had many an outburst of sudden angry passion, taking to itself for the hour the mood of hate. He had killed a man more than once in his time—and in countries where, as Waley said to Conrad, if you do kill a man, nobody takes much trouble about a prosecution at criminal law.

But the intense pleasure that Rose had always found in new sensation had generally been the excitement of risk and of danger; of success or failure in enterprise; the excitement of love-making; the excitement of studying himself under new conditions. Now, however, he found the keen sensation of intense hatred taking fast grip on him. He felt himself hating Jim Conrad, and according

to his fashion he cherished the new feeling, and cuddled it, and made much of it, and was determined to give it its head.

Just at the moment when he had become inflamed again with love for the wife whom he had not merely abandoned, but thrust from him with his cruel parting message conveyed through the ring and its inscription—just as he had resolved to win back her love, to conquer her and to capture her—just as he had found that to get her back would be to become possessed of money enough to enable him to take again that place in society which he had wantonly thrown away and now was passionately eager to recover—just at that crisis came in the young man who stood, as Rose was convinced, in the way of his reconquering his wife's affections. He had no doubt that Jim Conrad was madly in love with Clelia Rose; and how if Clelia Rose were in love with Jim Conrad? It was quite possible. He, Francis Rose, had cast her off; he had sent her that ring, with its confounded message telling her bluntly that their love-story had all come to an end.

What in the world had possessed him, he now asked himself, to do such a thing? Why could he not have remained away as other adventurous husbands do, until it suited him to come back—and never come back if he did not feel inclined for a move that way? But he must be theatric; he must be romantic; he must have a new sensation; he must do things in a way that no one had done things before. He well remembered the impulse that came on him. The ring was a copy of an old family ring which had come down to Clelia's father, who had the duplicate wrought in India, and gave it to Clelia, and Clelia had given it to Rose in Paris just before their marriage, and asked him to wear it day and night for her sake. Then they had invented, together, their fantastic little anagram

—Rosita to Francisco—and had it enamelled on the ring. And then—and then—and then he had made some excuse, after the first year of their marriage, for leaving her and wandering off on one of his enterprises. He propitiated himself by remembering that it was only after she had found him out, and had reproached him, and had told him that he was not the man she believed herself to have married, he first wanted to get away and be free; and the idea at last occurred to him to get the ring engraved inside with signs that might signify the close of their married life, and so send it to her to let her know that all was over between her and him. He well remembered—and he felt a self-comforting pride in the recollection—that at the time he really thought he was conveying his announcement of the inevitable in a very considerate, graceful, and romantic form, such as might possibly even soothe the morbid feelings of a young married woman whose husband did not find himself able to put up with married life any longer. Even still he could not help thinking that the thing, as it had to be done—and he was convinced then that it had to be done—was put into generous, regretful, and even tender shape.

But, oh! how he wished now that it never had been done! Why, even if he had been absent for many more years than he actually was absent, he could have invented any tale of a wrecked ship, a desert island, a capture by savages—anything, anything! Clelia had so trusting a nature that, if he had only managed her well, he was sure he could have got her to believe that he had been captured by a Barbary rover, and sold into slavery among the Paynims. Now he saw clearly what he might have so easily done and said:

‘I hated myself, Clelia—I had forfeited your love—I

had forfeited it deservedly—I could not endure civilization any more, or the sight of the place in which we had once been happy, and so I rushed off to the wildest regions I could find, longing for death, striving for death, and with only one hope in my heart, that when she heard of my early fate Clelia would feel sorry for me, and forgive me!’

Why, to be sure, that would have been the right thing to do! That would have fetched her—that would have fetched any nice woman. But he had spoiled all with his absurd valedictory ceremony and her confounded old ring. And now in came this young fellow with his youth and his sentiment—and a horribly well-set-up young fellow too—and he went and fell in love with Clelia, and who on earth was to say that she had not fallen in love with him? Some men would throw her over for ever, acknowledging all the while that it was their own infernal bungling that had made the mess.

‘But I am not the man to do that sort of thing,’ Sir Francis said to his own soul, with proud self-appreciation. ‘She did love me once, and she shall love me again. I’ll make her; by Jove! I’ll tame her. I’ll carry her off if I have to keep her in a cage. A week of imprisonment will bring her round to me. And as for him!’

Oh, if they were only in some of the far-off regions which he had studied not wisely but too well! Something must be done with him. If Waley could not manage to send him out to Patagonia or some such place—and Waley seemed, somehow, like chilling off this last day or two—why, then, it must be seen what counsel with Marmaduke Coffin had to offer. A good fellow, Marmaduke Coffin—a thorough good fellow, afraid of nothing, sticking at nothing. Yes, it must be seen what Marmaduke Coffin would have to advise.

And at that moment a waiter came and told him that a gentleman wished to see him—Mr. Marmaduke Coffin.

Sir Francis Rose almost started as he heard the name. He knew, of course, that Coffin was coming; he was expecting him, he had ordered him to come, he had fixed this place and the hour, and yet he almost started when at that precise moment he heard the announcement of Coffin's name. It was as if in some old story a sudden purpose of evil had called up in bodily presence some demon agent to press it on and carry it out.

Sir Francis Rose was not easily startled, and the shudder soon passed off, and he felt ashamed of himself for having felt even the slight and momentary shock. After all, no mortal can be always a perfect master of himself. The saint has his moments of shrinking from martyrdom. The bravo sometimes starts at a shadow, and fears each bush an officer.

Rose gave directions that Coffin should be shown into the little recess with which we are already well acquainted, in front of the window in one of the corridors, where people sometimes smoked who did not care to mount up to the regular smoking-room. It was Rose's fixed and deliberate belief that conspiracy of any kind was most safely carried on in public. A recess in a corridor just near a flight of stairs, with people always going up and down—who could suspect anything of conspiracy there?

Rose found Marmaduke Coffin in this little recess. Coffin rose and bowed as if he were greeting a conspirator of a higher class than himself—nothing more. Then Rose ordered cigars and whisky and soda. That being accomplished, and the waiter having disappeared, Rose came to business at once.

'I am glad you have come, Coffin.'

‘Of course I came,’ Coffin answered.

‘Yes. You are not a man of many scruples, Coffin. I have always known that of you.’

‘Haven’t any scruples,’ Coffin replied.

‘Of course not; no sensible man has.’

‘Waley has,’ Coffin said.

Sir Francis started once again, and looked into Coffin’s impassive face, trying to find an expression of meaning there. He found none. Coffin seemed like a man who is propounding some abstract scientific truth.

‘Yes, Waley has scruples; I have found that out,’ Rose said after a moment’s pause, during which he had been questioning himself as to whether Coffin could possibly have divined what was passing in the mind of his chief. Rose might as well have sought an explanation of what the blotting-pad was thinking by staring on the blotting-pad’s ink-besmirched surface.

‘You have your own ambition, Coffin.’

‘I have my own ambition.’

‘Yes, I know. Come now, what is it? You have not got much out of our joint enterprises so far, have you?’

‘Nothing at all.’

‘Of course, I know that. But you still expect?’

‘I still expect.’

‘What do you want?’

‘I want to be my own master.’

‘Come, I quite understand that sort of ambition. Now then, what sort of mastership do you want to have?’

‘I should like to set up a hair-cutting and hairdressing shop of my own—Rue de la Paix, Paris.’

Rose would have liked to smile, but knew that any such expression of amusement would be ill-timed. He was, however, intensely amused. Fancy what human ambition

Missing Page

Missing Page

‘Yes, yes, if it can possibly be avoided, of course,’ his chief hurriedly said. ‘Only you know that I am not counselling any act of violence—you quite understand that? What?’

‘I quite understand that you are not counselling any act of violence, only you want the man out of the way.’

‘Yes, if he can’t be prevailed upon to take himself out of the way and let me be rid of him.’

‘Prevailed upon by you, or by me?’

‘Prevailed upon by Waley.’

‘I see. Waley tries to talk him over, and if Waley fails, then I come in?’

‘That’s about it.’

‘That’s about it,’ Coffin echoed contemplatively.

‘You’ve got the whole business.’

‘And no questions asked?’

‘You may be sure I shan’t ask any questions. Other people may, of course.’

‘They may; I don’t mind about that.’

‘But you will remember that I have not advised you to do anything rash or violent?’

‘Chief,’ said Coffin solemnly, ‘a bargain is a bargain as between man and man. That’s what I always say, and what I say I stick to. You give me the money to buy the house in the Rue de la Paix, and that’s all you have got to do with the business—except to tell me when Waley has failed in his job, and when I come in.’

‘You shall know that in good time. This money—must it be paid all at once, Coffin?’

‘No; I can arrange about that. If I have your word, I can manage the business myself at any time that suits you.’

‘You have my word, Coffin; you can trust me.’

‘I trust you,’ Coffin said grimly. ‘And now, will you

tell me the man's name, and whereabouts he is likely to be found ?'

'You know the man already.'

'Do I? That makes it all the easier to manage. What is he called?'

Then Rose bent over and whispered a name.

No gleam of surprise or emotion of any kind passed over Coffin's face.

'Thought he was going out to Patagonia,' he said, after a moment of silence, and with gloomy, unabated coolness.

'I wanted him to go, but he seems to be backing out of it. He appears to prefer London just now,' Rose added, with a bitterness of tone which he could not repress, which it relieved him not to repress, although in another instant he told himself that he was a fool for expressing any emotions during the arrangement of such a purely business transaction.

'Don't wonder,' Coffin said; 'I shouldn't like to have to go out to Patagonia just now.'

'No,' Sir Francis said, with a half-smile. 'The Rue de la Paix has more charms—and the wife Number Two!'

'Right you are,' Coffin responded, without even half a smile.

'But don't you know that wife Number Two is a dangerous business? You may be extradited and brought over here and tried for bigamy.'

Somehow or other, although Coffin was Rose's chosen instrument, and seemed made for the purpose, there was something about his imperturbable coolness that irritated Rose. With all his physical daring, Rose felt that there were things he could not take so coolly, and it annoyed him.

'Nothing venture, nothing have,' said Coffin, in tone as earnest as if the proverb were then spoken for the first time

on earth. 'I run that risk for the woman—I run the other risk for the house.'

'The other risk?'

'The risk of the removal, don't you know?'

Was Coffin really trying to make a joke? The answer never can be given.

'The removal! What removal?'

'The removal of our friend, who don't want to visit Patagonia. Don't wonder at him. Patagonia must be a very stupid place.'

'To anyone who has lived in the Rue de la Paix.'

'That's it.'

'Come in to-morrow. Waley is not coming.'

'All right.'

'Well, I suppose we have said enough.'

Rose stood up. He put it not peremptorily, but gently. He was anxious to conciliate as far as he possibly could. But he began to find something uncanny, even to him, in the indifference of his follower to all risks and to all codes.

'Said all we want to, Sir Francis? Too much talk never of any use between men who understand each other.'

'Won't you have another whisky and soda?'

'No, thanks. Don't care much for drinks.'

'Another cigar, then?'

'Well, yes—another cigar—just to carry me home.'

He had his cigar, and he went his way. As he crossed St. James's Square he murmured to himself:

'Thought I should get hold of that house in the end. Knew I should. Hope that young fellow won't take it into his silly head to knock under, and go to Patagonia after all.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

'WHAT IS TO BE DONE FIRST?'

'WHAT is to be done—above all, what is to be done first?' Such was the thought that was rushing round and round in Jim Conrad's bewildered mind, like the blind wave in the cavern, the long sea-hall, which Tennyson pictured. Such was the thought that surged and stormed blindly enough, and beat for a while all purposelessly in poor Conrad's mind as he left Mr. Waley's company on that epoch-making night. It was now clear that Rose had determined to get back his deserted wife by force, if needs were; and in such force he would unquestionably, as Waley had pointed out, have at least the traditions of English law on his side. Jim did not care three straws about the threatened danger to himself. He would not have minded, anyhow; it would not have turned him from his purpose for one moment; in such a matter he did not hold his life at a pin's fee. But, in fact, he did not now believe there was any such danger. He reasoned, as most of us do, from our common daily experience.

'I have never heard of assassinations after the Sicilian or the Corsican fashion in England,' he would have said; 'and I don't believe that anything of the kind is going to be attempted for my especial benefit.'

That danger, therefore, did not really enter into his calculation. But the other was a danger, clear, probable—all but certain. The very sensation of capturing and carrying off in London the wife whom he had deserted would, as Jim knew, be a delightful experience to a man like Sir Francis Rose.

But what was to be done? What was to be done first? It was now ten o'clock—no more. Could he call at Clelia's hotel at such an hour, and put her on her guard? It would be better, much better, he thought, if in the first instance he were to see Gertrude Morefield. He could speak more freely to her; he could learn from her what were likely to be Clelia's resolves at such a moment of danger. It seemed a strange sort of proceeding to call on a young lady at a West-End hotel about ten o'clock in the evening; but he knew that Miss Morefield was not the least in the world conventional, and that she would have insisted on the right of girls to carry latch-keys if she had thought about such a matter at all. Anything, Jim told himself, would be better than allowing a whole night to pass without giving Clelia, directly or indirectly, some warning of the danger. So he drove to the hotel where the girls were staying, almost as nervous about asking to see a young woman after ten o'clock as if he were doing some deed calculated to fright the isle from its propriety.

Arrived at the hotel, he went to the office, asked to see Miss Morefield, and wrote upon the card he was sending up: 'Important — want to see you particularly,' and deeply underlined the 'you.' He was promptly shown into a small drawing-room, which was quite empty, and the lights of which were turned down. The lights were turned up again, and he was left alone for an anxious moment.

Then he heard a rustle of skirts, and Miss Morefield came into the room. She was looking pale, but very pretty, and was no more discomposed than if it had been Jim's regular habit to call at ten o'clock every night. She quietly shook hands with him, and came to the point at once.

'What is the matter?' she asked.

'That brings me here so late?'

She seemed to chafe at the awkward, unnecessary question, born of Jim's confusion.

'Yes, yes, tell me. You wanted to see me particularly?'

'Yes, I wanted to see you, and not Miss Vine—not at first, anyhow.'

'It concerns her, then?'

'It concerns her.'

'Tell me.'

'Do people come in here much?' he asked, glancing round at the empty room.

'Not at this hour; later, yes, when the theatres are over. We can talk here quite safely. Go on.'

'Miss Vine's husband—I mean, of course, Lady Rose's husband—is in London now.'

'I know; she told me. She has seen him.'

'He is determined that she shall return to him.'

'She will not; she has told me. We have talked it all over. She will die first; she has told me so.'

'All the same, he is determined to get her back.'

'He can't get her back.'

'He will try. You do not know the man. I know a good deal of him, and I know that he is capable of anything.'

'There are laws,' the girl said contemptuously.

'There are no laws that can prevent a husband from resuming his hold over his wife.'

'True!' Gertrude said, with a light of anger flashing triumphantly into her eyes. 'You have said it: there are no laws in this country, or in any other, I suppose, to protect women against the brutal tyranny of men.'

'Well, well,' Conrad said, a little impatiently, for he

thought the general question of woman's rights and woman's wrongs was rather out of place just then, and he did not know how soon some of the theatres might be closing; 'at all events, I don't believe there are any laws which would enable Lady Rose to escape from the control of her husband.'

He hated speaking of 'Lady Rose,' but what could he do? He could not go on talking of 'Miss Vine' escaping from her husband, and he did not like to speak of 'Clelia.'

Miss Morefield saw this, and frowned a little.

'Let us call her Clelia,' she said; 'I detest to hear her called Lady Rose.'

There was a generous flush on the girl's face.

'So do I,' said Jim earnestly.

And somehow Gertrude seemed to flush again.

'Well, what I came for,' Conrad went on, 'is to warn her of the danger—to warn you in the first instance, for you understand her, and you can tell her all you think she ought to know—and then, if she likes to see me, she can send for me.'

'But you have told me nothing, except that there is danger. Danger of what? There is no danger is his trying to get her to go back to him; she will not go.'

'Then he will carry her off by force!'

'My dear Mr. Conrad, this is not Circassia. This is safe and commonplace London. People don't do these things.'

'I tell you, Miss Morefield, that you are mistaken. This man will do that, or any other thing that he makes up his mind to. I have come at a knowledge which appears to me absolutely certain that he is determined to have her back again, and it will be only a delightful new sensation to him to carry her off by mere force.'

Jim felt somewhat disappointed in Miss Morefield's

manner. She did not seem, he thought, as much alarmed as she ought to be about her friend. Poor Jim had his mind full only of one subject, and he made that quite plain. Perhaps he made it just a little too plain under the circumstances. Decidedly, he was not very clever in understanding the feelings of girls.

A change came over Gertrude’s manner. She dropped her eyes, and remained silent for a moment. Then she spoke in a much softer tone.

‘Mr. Conrad, both she and I have absolute confidence in you, and in your judgment, and in your friendship. If you tell us that you really think there is danger——’

‘I know there is,’ he exclaimed—‘utter danger!’

‘Then I am sure there is danger.’

‘I can’t tell you how I came to know it,’ he said, ‘but there it is.’

‘We can take it on your word,’ she answered, with a sweet, resigned kind of smile, which touched Jim Conrad much, although he did not at the moment think of its significance; ‘and it is for you and me to guard her against it. We are her friends.’

‘She has no better friends,’ Jim declared earnestly.

‘She has no other friends now. Well, what can we do?’

‘Had we not better tell her at once? I mean, had you not better tell her?’

‘Perhaps so—oh yes, I think so. But just a moment first. When do you think this attempt might be made?’

‘I don’t know. Any time. This night, perhaps.’

‘In this hotel—full of people?’

‘It’s not likely, but it would be quite possible. The man is equal to anything. Suppose he gave his name; suppose he is known here to be the man he represents himself to be; suppose he claimed his wife. She couldn’t

say that she wasn't his wife ; you couldn't say it. Who would prevent him from taking her in his arms and carrying her off ?

'This is terrible !' said the girl, turning pale.

'If I were here,' said Jim, 'I'd kill him rather than let him carry her off.'

'If I were she,' said Miss Morefield, 'I'd kill myself rather than let him carry me off, and I hope she'll do it.'

Jim shook his head sadly. The same thought had sometimes flashed through his own mind and through his own heart.

'It mustn't come to that,' he said in a despondent tone that half belied the assurance of his words.

'If I were she, I'd rather do it,' said the impetuous little maid, 'than drag out life in enforced companionship with a wretch like him.'

'Well, hadn't we better see her and talk with her ?' Jim asked, feeling it hopeless then and there to argue back to first principles in morals. 'Or would you rather tell it all to her yourself, and send for me to-morrow, supposing that you want me ?'

'Oh no ; you must come now and see her at once. You must tell us what we are to do.'

'All right ; let us go.'

Gertrude led the way. They went upstairs without exchanging a word as they went. Then they reached the sitting-room, and Gertrude opened the door and went in, and said :

'Clelia dear, here is Mr. Conrad.'

Clelia had been leaning on the chimney-piece with head drooping. Before she had time to turn round, Jim had caught sight of the attitude and interpreted it.

The attitude was not that of anxiety, into which doubt

and possibility may enter. It was the attitude of one who expects to hear the worst, and only waits in enforced patience until the worst be formally announced.

Then Clelia turned round and gave Jim her hand. It was a hand of marble coldness.

‘I knew it was about me when you sent for Gertrude. I knew that you two were conspiring together to save me from some danger—you two—my best, my only friends.’

Jim’s heart was touched beyond all expression when he remembered that but a few minutes before Gertrude herself had said just the same thing, in only slightly different words—that she and he were Clelia’s only friends.

‘You could not have two friends on this earth,’ he exclaimed, ‘who would go farther to keep you from harm.’

‘As if I did not know that!’ and with an almost childish impulse of confidence she took for a moment a hand of each in hers, and Jim felt in his very soul that it would be a rapture for him to die defending her. ‘Well,’ Clelia went on, having put down her outbreak of emotion, ‘tell me your news. I shall not be frightened. Perhaps I can already guess it.’

‘Perhaps you can,’ Jim answered sadly; and then, as Gertrude seemed to leave him to tell the tale, he told her in a low, rapid, but clear voice, just what he had told Miss Morefield.

‘I was afraid it would come to this,’ Clelia said quietly. ‘Well, what is to be done? I will not go back to him. I feel like some heroine of a melodrama;’ and she smiled a wan smile. ‘I will never be taken alive.’

‘Quite right!’ Gertrude exclaimed, stamping her little foot, and with a warlike flash from her bright eyes.

‘Well, it must not come to that,’ Jim said soothingly.

‘But what’s the good of saying that?’ Gertrude de-

manded impatiently, imperiously. 'Tell her what she is to do—how she is to escape.'

In all this confusion, Jim looked with some surprise at the pretty impulsive girl, with the puckered eyebrows and the angry eyes. There were moods of Gertrude to-night which he could not quite understand.

'You must both get away out of this,' he said, as quietly as he could.

'Yes, yes; we know all that. We are not going to stay here to be taken like rats in a hole. Where can Clelia get to this night—this very night? Tell us—tell us. Can't we get to the Continent this very night?'

'You can't go to the Continent to-night,' Jim said. 'There is no train to Dover or Folkestone before the morning.'

'But we can go somewhere—somewhere out of this, can't we?' the unsatisfied girl insisted. 'I don't care where we go, if we only get out of London.'

'Have you much luggage?' asked Jim, thrown into a practical mood of consideration by the girl's impracticable impatience.

'Luggage! luggage! As if we were likely to drag around great piles of Saratoga trunks; or as if it would matter whether we left them behind!'

Now, it was becoming clear to Jim in his practical mood that for the two women to decamp from a West End hotel at eleven o'clock at night would be simply to give Sir Francis Rose or anybody else the easiest way of getting on their track. But he was at first almost afraid to say this, lest Gertrude might think him too easy-going about Clelia's safety—which, indeed, was the last thought likely to come into Gertrude's mind.

'Let us risk this night,' Clelia said, with a quiet smile.

‘Night brings counsel, are we not told? and morning brings comfort. To-morrow we may be able to see our way a little clearer—whether the comfort comes or not.’

‘But suppose something does happen to-night?’ Jim broke in, with a renewal of his former alarm. ‘Suppose he chooses to make a melodramatic business of it this very night? I tell you that the man only lives on sensation, and that his whole life is one long indulgence in the delight of new emotions. It might just suit him to make a grand melodramatic scene here this very night——’

‘But against that we can have no security,’ Clelia said. In her heart she could not help wondering how entirely Jim’s analysis of her husband’s nature and temperament agreed with her own. ‘We can’t get away to-night without giving an alarm, and calling attention to our flight. To-morrow we may be able to do something better. Let us part for the night, Mr. Conrad; and you can come and see Gertrude and me to-morrow.’

‘Yes, I think you are right,’ Jim answered, almost reluctantly. ‘I don’t see that anything much can be done to-night. Anyhow, I am strongly against your going to the Continent. Nobody can cross the Channel in these days without its being found out by anybody who cares to know, and who can follow in a few hours. Much better go to New York. To-morrow—well, I shall have thought something out. I am sure you had better keep in London and lie low for a day or two, but not here, of course—not here. You can’t go into a suburb; the people in a suburb always take notice of new-comers. No, no, some crowded central place where strangers are going and coming all day long. How long may I stay here and talk to you?’ He looked first at Clelia and then at Gertrude. ‘Which of you is hostess?’

‘I suppose I ought to be hostess,’ Clelia said with composure, ‘because I am a married woman. But then, you see, I don’t pass for a married woman here. Which of us is hostess, Gertrude dear?’

‘Oh, how do I know, and what does it matter? Who cares which of us is hostess?’

‘Well, which of you will tell me how late I may stay with you to-night? Must I go before the theatres empty out and people come back here?’

‘If you ask me,’ Gertrude said, ‘I don’t care three straws.’

‘I think,’ Clelia interposed, ‘you had better go now, Mr. Conrad. There is nothing to be gained by seeming to be eccentric. We are in a country of conventionality.’

‘Oh, conventionality!’ Gertrude exclaimed, and it seemed as if she could say no more.

That one word appeared to express thoughts too deep for words—at all events, for words that had to be spoken within a limited lapse of time.

‘Come to-morrow, Mr. Conrad,’ Clelia said. ‘Come to breakfast or to luncheon.’

She spoke with as much quietude as if she were an ordinary London hostess inviting some friend to an everyday sort of entertainment. Jim was immensely impressed by her courage and her coolness.

‘Never mind about breakfast or luncheon,’ he said; ‘may I come at ten? I shall have thought things out by then, and I don’t suppose now that anything will happen to-night. Anyhow, we must chance it.’

‘Come at ten by all means,’ Clelia answered. ‘Nothing will happen to-night.’

Jim was about to take his leave.

‘I want to say a word or two to you before you go,’ Clelia said. ‘Gertrude darling, would you mind leaving us for a few minutes?’

‘No,’ Gertrude returned, ‘not the least in the world. But I, too, want to say a word to Mr. Conrad before he goes.’

‘Oh, do you?’ Clelia asked, with a glance of bright good humour.

‘Yes, I do,’ Gertrude affirmed doggedly. ‘So, Clelia, when you have talked with Mr. Conrad, you can go away for the night, don’t you see?—I mean, from this room, of course. I shall come to you in your bedroom.’

‘Very well, dear,’ Clelia answered, and Gertrude disappeared.

The moment she had gone the whole manner of Clelia changed. An intense earnestness settled on her which made her face seem like that of the statue of a stern, despairing goddess.

‘My friend,’ she said, in a low, firm tone, ‘I appeal to you as the one only friend who could help me at this pass as I want to be helped. The help I ask from you I could not ask from Gertrude.’

‘What is there that I would not do for you?’

‘Perhaps you will not do this for me, but I do so hope and so trust that you will.’

‘Tell me! tell me!’ Jim said breathlessly.

‘Well, you know as well as I do, you believe as well as I do, that life—mere life—life—life is not a great thing—is not the only thing—life without love, and the sense of honour and purity. Oh, you must understand!’

And Jim began to understand.

‘Then,’ she went on, ‘will you bring me, when you come to-morrow—at ten o’clock, wasn’t it?—a strong, sharp dagger? I shouldn’t be able to make any use of the common or garden knife of commerce,’ she said with another wan smile. ‘It would bend, or break, or some-

thing, and I want to be quite, quite sure. Bring me a sharp, strong dagger with a keen point and a broadening blade. I promise you that it shall only be used in the very, very last resort; but I want to use it effectively then. You will do this for me—you will not refuse? You must understand the feelings of a woman—the horror, the loathing! You will do this for me—and her voice sank into an exquisite sweetness and plaintiveness of tone—‘my friend—in this my very only friend?’

Jim had a moment of bewildering doubt and agony. Then he said firmly:

‘I will do this. That man shall not get hold of you. Better go to your God.’

‘Thank you,’ she said fervently, and she pressed his hand. ‘And one thing more: If the worst should happen, or the better—if, anyhow, poor Gertrude should be left alone—you will turn your thoughts to her, will you not?—will you not?’

She did not wait for an answer—for an answer which Conrad could not have given—but she turned away, and ran out of the room.

In a moment Gertrude entered.

‘I don’t want to keep you long,’ she said, with a certain vague suggestion of scorn in her voice; ‘but I want you to do one thing for me, and not to tell anybody of it. I want you to buy me a good, small revolver, and come here at half-past nine to-morrow, and explain it all to me, and show me how to use it, and then load it for me.’

‘What on earth do you want a revolver for?’ Jim asked, with a quite involuntary emphasis on the ‘you.’ The thought in his mind was, ‘You are safe enough. Francis Rose does not propose to carry you off.’

‘I want it to defend Clelia. If that wretch tries to carry her off I will shoot him!’

‘Oh! I wouldn’t do that,’ Jim remonstrated. ‘It would be absurd.’

‘All right,’ she said, with scornful eyes; ‘I can buy it for myself. There is a gunsmith’s in this street, only a few doors off. I noticed it to-day. But I thought a man might be of some use to one—only, I suppose, he can’t be. Well, we can do without him—some of us, at all events.’

Jim was bewildered. Clelia’s request was tragic; Gertrude’s bordered terribly on the comic.

‘Would they sell the girl a revolver?’ he asked of himself. ‘Yes, I suppose they would. I’d better see that she gets a safe little weapon that won’t burst in her hands on the first go-off.’ He remembered in his boyish days having bought a little Derringer in a London shop after long scraping up of pocket-money, and how, at the very first pulling of the trigger, the Derringer simply burst, and a fragment of the barrel’s metal lodged in his right hand, and could not be got out for weeks after. ‘That is the sort of weapon she would be sure to buy,’ he thought—‘only with five or six chambers to increase the danger.’

‘Well?’ she asked impatiently.

‘All right,’ he answered, ‘or all wrong—I don’t know which—I’ll bring you the revolver to-morrow.’

‘Thank you, and good-night.’

In a moment he was alone, and he went down the stairs and got into the hall, and passed out into the street, hardly knowing where he was or what he was doing. He had engaged to supply two young women with deadly weapons—one to commit suicide, the other to kill an enemy. His mind was completely topsy-turvy. Was the genteel, elegant, commonplace Albemarle Street hotel about to become a sort of Front de Bœuf’s castle? And he knew that both the women from whom he had just parted were absolutely in earnest.

‘Very well,’ he said to himself, ‘the laws can’t help us. Some of us have only to act as the outlaw acts.’

The hotel stood not far from the opening of Grafton Street. As Jim turned into Grafton Street, he suddenly came in the moonlight on Sir Francis Rose’s acquaintance, Captain Martin, the Patagonian traveller, who was so curiously modest, and even reticent, about his experiences in Patagonia. The meeting did not impress Jim at the time, but he remembered it afterwards. They exchanged a salutation hurriedly, and Jim passed through Grafton Street, and then wandered vaguely down Bond Street to Piccadilly. He was uncertain what to do. He would have liked to stand guard over Clelia’s hotel all night long. He did, in fact, come back to the spot again and again. Hour after hour he revisited the scene, never leaving interval long enough for any complicated series of incidents to take place in the meantime.

At last it became to his mind quite clear that nothing was likely to happen that night, and he knew he had many things to think out before he was to return there next day, and so he went home.

Meanwhile the gallant Captain Martin had gone straight on to the Voyagers’ Club and asked for Sir Francis Rose. Sir Francis Rose, it seemed, had left the club long before. Then Captain Martin went to the street near Berkeley Square, and found that the lights in his patron’s flat were out. He thought that perhaps Sir Francis had not yet returned, and so he lingered longer—lingered very much longer; but at last he gave it up for that night. Sir Francis must have gone to bed, and it certainly was not worth disturbing him merely to tell him that Mr. Conrad had paid a late visit that night to the hotel in Albemarle Street.

‘To-morrow will do,’ he said.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE NEXT?

JIM CONRAD thought it out that night with every fibre of his brain active and strained in the business of thinking. He wanted to prepare against all the difficulties—to stop all the earths, in the foxhunter's phrase. He felt sure at last that he had a plan as near to perfection as might be, in readiness for the morning's meeting. This was the outline of his plan: Clelia and Gertrude were to go to New York from Southampton; they had been thinking and talking of going to the United States, and they might as well go now. The steamers that sail from Liverpool touch nearly all at Queenstown, and if Sir Francis Rose got a hint of his wife's having left from Liverpool, he would be waiting for her and ready to board the steamer at Queenstown; but the steamers sailing from Southampton make for the Atlantic straightway, and have no port to touch at.

There were many advantages, Conrad thought, in Clelia's going to New York. If once she got safely off, and by one of the fast steamers, there could be no possible pursuit for some days to come. Pursuit to the Continent is a matter merely of hours.

Then, Conrad did not believe that in New York the judicial authorities would be apt to trouble themselves much with intervention merely because an English married lady, whose husband did not profess to have any charge against her, had made a voyage to New York with another lady, even without his permission.

Jim's idea, therefore, was that he should call at the Albemarle Street hotel early, bringing his sheaves with

him—that is, his revolver and his dagger—for distribution, that he should divulge his whole scheme to the young women, and that, if they acceded to it, he should at once take berths for them in the first steamer sailing from Southampton. This day was Thursday, and the next steamer would leave Southampton at noon on the Saturday. That was coming to close quarters indeed; but, then, there were two lines of first-class steamers running every Saturday between Southampton and New York, and it was not a time of the year when Europeans rush across the Atlantic. Excepting for the depth of the winter, the early spring is perhaps the time when the Englishman has least idea or opportunity of undertaking a trip to America; therefore, Conrad had little doubt that he should be able one way or another to secure berths for Clelia and Gertrude and their maids.

Meanwhile, he thought the best thing to do would be to take rooms for them at one of the great hotels near to Westminster Bridge, and, by consequence, to the Waterloo Station—this end, if we may put it so, of Southampton.

He had thought first of a small hotel or of quiet lodgings in one of the narrow streets running off the Strand down to the river. But on turning the matter over in his mind he came to the conclusion that the safest thing of all would be to go to one of the great big flaring, crowded hotels of the Northumberland Avenue quarter. No one would be likely to assume that two women seeking escape from London would even for a single night domicile themselves in one of these vast open public places. He would go and take berths in the steamer—he would go and take rooms in the hotel; and later on the maids could quietly convey the luggage to the right place. But in the meanwhile Clelia and Gertrude would have to be

left alone, and he could not bear the idea of leaving them at the Albemarle Street hotel until he had arranged everything for their flight. Sir Francis would be almost certain to go to Albemarle Street that day and seek his wife.

What was to be done? Conrad racked his brain, and at last worked out an idea. He had thought of bestowing the young women in the National Gallery—‘No one ever goes to the National Gallery,’ he said to himself. No—he suddenly pulled up—that might be a reasonable description of things in general; but suppose anybody did go to the National Gallery, or suppose anybody were seen going into the National Gallery—suppose anybody were followed into the National Gallery—what protection would be afforded there for the pursued? The officials would simply bundle all the disputants into the street, and Sir Francis would have a good chance of securing his end. Jim had got to another and a better idea. He would deposit the ladies in the gallery of one of the courts of law in the Strand, and let them wait there until he had arranged all about the passages and the hotel. Suppose Sir Francis Rose, by an extraordinary possibility, were to find out that his wife was in the gallery of one of the courts of law—and supposing that anybody, not being a practising lawyer there, could find his way into any of the courts of law—and suppose he were then and there to claim his wife, and insist on carrying her off by force, what would happen to him? The judge, if he condescended to interrupt public business by listening to his appeal, and did not at once order him to be turned into the street, would simply tell him that he must proceed to enforce his rights by the ordinary legal process, and then, if he persevered in his interruption, would commit him to prison for contempt of court. All things considered, Jim

Conrad came to the conclusion that there was no sanctuary in the world so absolutely safe in its protection as the shelter of one of the law courts in the Strand. Jim could not help thinking, amid all his excitement and his frank recognition of the possibility of some terrible tragedy being close at hand, that the shelter in the law court was something fit to suggest a scene to Mr. Gilbert.

He was up early; he had hardly slept all night, his mind had been so engrossed by his plans, and by the whole crisis, and by the all but certainty that he was soon to see Clelia for the last time. Come what would, it was all over between him and her. He had promised her that, should she get off free, he would never make any attempt to see her again. He would keep his word. For the moment he did not allow himself much time to think over even this. The effort to help her sustained him. The hour had not come for thinking of his own hopeless love. That would come later on; there would be plenty of time for it when she had gone. What was he to do with himself when all that dream was over, and there remained nothing for him but the cold and crude and cruel routine and realities of daily life? Yet it is due to him to say that such were not the thoughts now uppermost in his mind. He was thinking only of how he might be most serviceable to her. He had got into that exalted frame of mind, that noblest of manly moods, whether it concerns a cause or a woman, when the man says to himself, and feels what he says: 'Let me perish, so it be well with you.'

He was with the young women in good time, and before he saw Clelia he gave Gertrude her revolver, and likewise a careful instruction in the use of it—a lesson which he directed rather with a view to her own personal safety than to any effective attack upon an enemy. Gertrude

was very proud of the weapon and the instruction, and said that now at last she felt like a man. Conrad thought that if she felt like one particular man her feelings were by no means to be envied; but he forbore from uttering his sentiments on that point. Both Clelia and Gertrude accepted his plans quite cordially. Clelia was just as willing to go to New York as to Paris, and, indeed, saw all the advantages that Jim eagerly pointed out. The rest was easy. The maids were to remain in Albemarle Street until Jim had taken berths in the steamer and rooms in the hotel, and came back and told them so. Then they were to carry the luggage to the hotel for which he had arranged. Meanwhile Clelia and Gertrude were to spend a delightful afternoon in one of her Majesty's Courts of Justice in the Strand, and to wait there until Jim should come to release them, and to consign them to the shelter of the Northumberland Avenue hotel.

The plan worked very smoothly. Clelia and Gertrude had the advantage of hearing the trial of a very important action which was brought to recover damages for injuries caused to the wife of the plaintiff by the servant of an omnibus company who had allowed his omnibus to knock her down in Old Broad Street, City. The court was not crowded, and there was plenty of room for the ladies in the gallery, where Jim had bestowed them. They did not give an absorbing attention to the case. They talked in low whispers to each other about matters of more immediate personal interest. Even the verdict of the jury failed to awaken them to any strong emotion—especially, perhaps, as neither of them had the least idea about which way the verdict went. Their thoughts were filled with Conrad's coming back; with the news he would bring them; with the chances of their getting off to New York; with the

chances of their getting out of London undiscovered and unmolested by Sir Francis Rose. The time did not even seem to hang upon their hands. We too commonly make up our minds to the belief that hours of anxiety are necessarily slow in their passing. There is an anxiety which sometimes compresses and condenses time.

Meanwhile the hours that Clelia and Gertrude lingered and whispered through in her Majesty's court of law in the Strand were well employed by Jim Conrad in driving round to the offices of steamship companies and to big Northumberland Avenue hotels. He was lucky enough to secure berths in one of the steamers leaving Southampton on Saturday—the very next day—and his heart thrilled with his success. Only think of it! The poor youth was in love with Clelia Rose, and yet his heart thrilled with the success which took her away from him—in all probability for ever. Love is cruelly selfish sometimes, but sometimes, too, Heaven be praised! it is utterly unselfish. 'I have saved her,' Jim Conrad thought; and for the moment that was all he thought about.

He took rooms at one of the big hotels—that was easy work. Then he drove back to Albemarle Street and packed off the maids. Nothing had been heard, he knew by negative evidence, of Sir Francis Rose. When the maids and the luggage were off the premises, he stood for half a moment at the door of the hotel. Just at that half-moment, to his surprise, Captain Martin happened to be passing by. They exchanged a salute. This time the encounter set Jim thinking, but he could make nothing of it.

Then he went back to the law court in the Strand, and he set forth to the ladies what he had done, and gave them their steamer tickets, and told them about the hotel, and put them into a cab, and all was over.

Captain Martin had been looking for his patron early that morning, but had failed to find him. Sir Francis Rose had not been home all night. Captain Martin, not knowing anything better to do, had strolled up to Albemarle Street again later on, and there he saw Jim Conrad standing at the door. He went back again and again to the flat out of Berkeley Square, and at last, and when the day was pretty far advanced, he succeeded in seeing Sir Francis Rose, who had just come in from a revel at a fast country house some twenty miles from London, where he had been playing deeply and winning largely. The smile of a winner's exultation passed off Rose's features when he heard the news that Captain Martin had to tell.

'Why didn't you tell me this before?' he asked, in all the blind mechanical rage of a man who wants to be furious with somebody, and forgets that he himself is alone to blame.

'Because I couldn't find you,' was the answer, given politely, but with a certain tone of injured dignity. 'You weren't at home, and you didn't tell me where you were going, or how I could communicate with you.'

'There's something in that,' Rose admitted blandly, sadly. 'How very like me to do such a thing as that! Well, we must go to Albemarle Street at once; and you, my esteemed and gallant friend, must go in your capacity of detective officer, accompanying me, and not as a soldier and a Patagonian explorer.'

For all his fierce, impassioned fury against Conrad, Rose began to see a certain element of humour in the situation.

It is needless to say that they came too late. The ladies had gone, and had left no address. Nobody knew where they had gone to. It was no affair of the manager of the hotel. One of the ladies might be the wife of the gentle-

man. The manager neither accepted nor disputed the statement; but the names in the hotel books were not those of married ladies. The manager, in fact, was totally indifferent, and did not seem to care a button when he was informed that one of those who called on him was a detective officer. Sir Francis Rose stormed a good deal at first, but then became gradually impressed with the conviction that he was making a fool of himself. So he left the hotel and stalked out into the evening air of Albemarle Street. Then he put the police part of the investigation into the hands of the gallant Captain Martin, especially enjoining him to have the Dover and Folkestone steamers looked after, and, of course, not to make any row, but to see where the ladies were going, if he could get at them. Rose gave all these directions with an increasing conviction that Martin would be sure to go to the wrong place and do the wrong thing. Martin suggested that it might be well to make inquiries at all the big London hotels. Sir Francis Rose smiled compassionately.

‘Just like a professional detective,’ he said. ‘As if there was the least chance of their going to one of the big hotels! But try there if you like.’

The professional pride of the detective was offended, and he did not try.

Sir Francis rushed back to his flat. He was in a mood of storm, and he blew up the waves of the storm as a malign sea-god might do who was determined on some act of destruction. He sent a messenger at once for Coffin. He was furious with Coffin because nothing had been done. Why had not Coffin carried out his promise—his pledge? Did he expect to get the house in the Rue de la Paix for nothing? Did Coffin believe that he, Rose, was a fool?—a ‘blind buzzard idol,’ as Milton says? The idea and the

words came into Rose's mind. He had read them in some quotation from Milton's prose writings long and long ago, and they had not flashed back upon his memory until now. 'Do they all believe I am a blind buzzard idol?' he savagely asked himself. 'Does Waley? Does that sham Sir Galahad—that self-constituted squire of dames—Jim Conrad, believe it? Does Clelia believe it?' He would soon let them know—let them all and every one know—how confoundedly they were mistaken.

He looked at his watch; for amid all his storming he remembered that he had arranged a pleasant little dinner-party at the Savoy Restaurant, and he was not going to be put off that by anybody. It was now seven o'clock.

Then he heard the electric bell at his outer door tingle, and then there was a quick knock at his study door, and he shouted 'Come in,' and Marmaduke Coffin crept into the room with the familiar stealthiness of tread, and with a countenance of composed and self-satisfied gloom.

'So you have done nothing!' Rose said fiercely.

'Couldn't do anything. Hadn't a chance.'

'My Heaven!' Rose exclaimed, 'I am well off between you. Waley can't get this young fellow even to leave the country, and you can't get him——'

'Out of the world,' said Coffin grimly.

'Out of the world—yes, if you like to put it in that way,' Rose answered, with a contemptuous toss of his head.

'Put it any way you like, chief,' said the imperturbable Coffin.

'I suppose I must take it in hand myself,' Rose said with increasing scorn; for he began to be afraid that both his retainers were cooling in their ardour for his cause.

'Good idea,' Coffin said, nodding with an air of grave approval—something like that which an undertaker might

assume as he accepted a suggestion about the arrangement of the hearse.

‘What do you mean by a good idea?’

‘Idea of your going into the thing yourself. Go to his house, lodging, whatever it is, demand to know about your wife, talk up and loud. Quarrel follows—I’ll take care of him in quarrel. Judicial inquiry—injured husband seeking lawful wife—row—attack on injured husband—faithful friend, too zealous, defends him—assailant killed—nothing planned—no murder—all parties get easily off. Injured husband leaves court without stain on character—zealous friend gets twelve months at most—and then house Rue de la Paix!’

‘By Jove! I think there’s something in what you say,’ Rose declared, and his eyes sparkled with cruel satisfaction. He had always felt a little doubtful about the consequences to himself in case he should secure the assassination of Conrad. In his present mood of hatred and revenge he would not have been deterred by any such consideration—that is, he would not have held back the murderous hand.

Still, it might be a very serious business for him, and even if he should get out of the country all right, it would perhaps involve questions of extradition and all that troublesome sort of thing, allowing a traveller no rest anywhere for the sole of his foot. He thought there was a stroke of positive genius in Coffin’s suggestion.

‘Thou art the best of the cut-throats!’ he exclaimed.

‘Am I really?’ Coffin asked, quite gratified.

‘I was only quoting from Shakespeare,’ Rose added hurriedly.

‘Indeed,’ said Coffin placidly; ‘I never read Shakespeare. I saw a play of his once in Paris—I don’t remember where, and I forget what it was.’

Then he shut his mouth.

Rose strode up and down the room, thinking the whole thing right out. He had not in his mind the slightest suspicion as to the integrity of his wife. Neither when he loved her madly, as he did once before, and as he did now, or when he hated her madly, as he had done before, did he ever fail to recognise the genuine purity of her nature. But he hated Conrad none the less.

There was a pause. Rose looked at Coffin as if he expected him to say something oracular. Coffin was equal to the occasion. The oracle spoke.

‘Send for Waley,’ Coffin said.

‘What in the name of patience do we want with Waley?’ Rose asked angrily.

He was for the moment quite disappointed with the oracle.

‘Waley will go to help you in recovering your wife. Waley no man of violence. Good witness, Waley—show that it was all only a row—no plan—no thought of killing anyone.’

‘By Jove! you are right again,’ Rose exclaimed. ‘Coffin, you positively shine to-night. You may count on that house in the Rue de la Paix, provided, of course, you get the job done.’

‘Leave the job to me. You pitch into Conrad pretty hard, threaten him, make him attack you—mind, make him attack you. Leave the rest to me. We’ll call Waley as evidence.’

‘Go for Waley at once,’ Rose said.

‘No. Better you wire for Waley yourself.

‘Why so?’

‘Better. Will please him to be sent for by you. Thinks, perhaps, he is left too much out of the business—inner

circle, you know. Send for him and consult him—make it all right.'

'What put that idea into your head?' Rose asked sharply.

'Have a head—idea got into it—that's all.'

'Yes, you have a head,' Rose said in a tone of admiration. 'I am sure you are right in this, too. I'll wire for Waley at once.'

'I'll take the wire,' Coffin said.

'Why so? I can send it by the messenger.'

'Better I should take it.'

'For what reason? They might know you at the post-office.'

'All right. That's it?'

'That's what?'

'I take a message asking the man who is not violent to come with us. Shows there is no plan for killing prepared by anyone. See?'

Sir Francis's features relaxed into a smile for the first time that evening. He was beginning to wonder how he had failed to see Coffin's striking qualities so long. He wrote the message asking Waley to come to him at half-past eleven—for he meant to enjoy his dinner—and handed it to Coffin for delivery; and then alone he waited in some anxiety—not as to what was to be done—for about that his determination did not falter—but about the manner of doing it.

He did not believe for a moment that Conrad had any plan for carrying off his wife. He knew perfectly well that nothing of the kind had ever entered into Conrad's head, and he was equally sure that had it entered there, it would have to pass out again quite unfulfilled. But he felt none the less hatred to Conrad on that account. The

conviction was settled deep down in his heart that but for Conrad he should have got his wife again—with her money.

The little dinner-party was very pleasant, and Rose left it reluctantly. His weakness was that he never at any given moment quite knew which enjoyment he preferred. He went home and met Waley, and told his story.

‘Don’t believe a word of it,’ Waley quickly answered. ‘What I mean is that I am quite sure you are misinformed, chief. I know the young chap pretty well. I can size up any man when I come to study him, and I don’t believe he ever thought of doing anything of the sort.’

‘You seem to have a high opinion of him, Waley,’ Rose said with passionate contempt in his look and his voice.

‘So I have.’

‘Well, at any rate, your impeccable friend has been helping my wife to get away from me——’

‘That’s quite another pair of shoes, don’t you see? A man might do the one thing who wouldn’t do the other.’

‘Do you dare to back him up, Waley—here, to my face?’

‘I don’t back him up. I believe a man ought to be very careful how he interferes between husbands and wives, anyhow—I suppose that is religion, ain’t it? But there are degrees in wrong-doing, I take it for granted.’

‘The man who interferes between me and my wife shall pay the penalty for it!’ Rose exclaimed.

‘Quite right,’ came in the raven voice of Coffin, who had been with Rose before Waley arrived.

‘Let it be so,’ Waley said. ‘What do you propose to do?’

‘I’ll go to his rooms, and I’ll talk to him, and he must tell me where my wife has gone, or I’ll know the reason why.’

‘Suppose he doesn’t know?’ Waley asked in perfect good faith.

‘Oh, rot! He does know. I have evidence that he was there this very day, and late last evening also.’

‘Suppose he won’t tell?’

‘He shall tell. I’ll drag the story from his very throat!’

‘Well, do you want me to go with you on this expedition?’

‘Yes; I think you ought to be with me. I think you ought to stand by and help me. Are you my friend, or are you my enemy?’

‘I am your friend, chief, and not your enemy, as you know well; and just because I am your friend I’ll go with you on this business. Who else is going? You don’t want a crowd, I suppose?’

‘Coffin is going,’ Rose said, not without a certain visible reluctance and a scrutinizing look at Waley’s face.

‘Oh, Coffin’s going? All right. Yes, I’ll go, certainly. But I should have thought two to one would be enough for all purposes.’

‘How do I know what confounded devil’s work such a scoundrel may be up to?’

‘Oh, you take it in that way! Very well, I’m with you, chief. I can see fair play, at all events, if I can do nothing else.’

Rose cast a keen, distrustful glance at him, but said nothing.

‘When shall we go?’ Waley asked.

Rose answered: ‘Now.’

CHAPTER XXVI.

A LEAP IN THE DARK.

JIM CONRAD returned late to his home in Clarges Street. His long day’s work was done. He had taken leave of his friends. He had made every arrangement for them, and

he was to see them no more. They were all agreed that he must not see them off by the train for Southampton, and that they were to go their way alone. Clelia, he knew, would not write to him—at least, for a long time.

It could hardly be said that the sacrifice was consummated, for in his case there was no sacrifice to consummate. Clelia was a married woman, and a pure woman, and there was nothing for him to sacrifice; he had nothing to give up which could have been his, which he could have held. But he felt like one who had lost all that makes life dear. He looked mournfully, pathetically, and yet with a certain grim sense of the ludicrous, at the fitting-up of the rooms in which he had taken so much pride and pleasure, while yet it was not all certain—not all quite certain—that his hopes and his love must be blighted. He sat down and smoked a cigar, and glanced at the books and the pictures, the etchings and the colour-sketches, which had once been a delight to him to arrange in their places.

The one desire—the immemorial desire—of the young man whose love is made hopeless was borne in strongly on him. He had now no thought but for the consolation of going away—of travelling far and wide; of drenching and drowning his grief in years of wandering. Some lines of a great and now all-but-forgotten poet came into his mind—lines that he had not seen or thought of since he was a romantic boy, and he felt their force with a thrilling intensity:

‘I care not to what land ye bear,
So not again to mine.’

‘Now is the time for Waley and Patagonia,’ he muttered to himself. ‘Now let Waley arrange for me what plans he will in Patagonia. Patagonia is not by any means too far away for me. I should like to go to the land east of

the sun, west of the moon,' and he thus came in his poetic rhapsody to a more modern poet than the author of 'Childe Harold.'

It was late—wellnigh on to midnight. He was roused by a sharp and reiterated ring at the electric bell in the hall-door. He felt sure that the servants were all in bed, and, as it so happened, he was now the only lodger in the house. He ran quietly downstairs and opened the door, at which, even as he stood there, another pressure sent the bell tingling once again through the house, and he could hear a voice outside which seemed to be speaking in remonstrance against the hastily repeated summons. Jim undid the bolts and the chain, opened the door, and saw, in the soft moonlight, three men standing on the pavement. The whole purpose was made clear to him when he heard the voice of Sir Francis Rose.

'I have come to know what you have done with my wife!' Rose said fiercely.

Even in that note the voice sounded strangely musical.

Conrad's courage and composure came back to him in a moment. He was not much surprised, after all. Something like this was to be expected; the wonder was that he had not expected it.

'If you will come in, and come upstairs, Sir Francis Rose,' he said very quietly, 'I shall be quite ready to give you any explanation that it is in my power to give.'

'All right! all right!' the cheery voice of Waley came in. 'That is just what we want to have. Come in, chief; we mustn't make a row. This sort of thing is best talked of quietly, and indoors.'

'Quite right! quite right!' sounded the deep funereal notes of the solid Coffin.

The three came in, and Conrad closed the door. They

mounted the stairs in absolute silence, and Conrad showed them into his room.

‘It is a little late,’ he said, ‘and the house is quiet. There are only women-servants, and they are all in bed, and I don’t want any noise made. But I am quite willing, Sir Francis Rose, to talk to you on any subject you wish to mention——’

‘You’ve got to!’ Coffin grumbled in.

‘Shut up, Coffin!’ Waley urged in a low tone.

‘Where is my wife?’ Rose demanded, striding quite closely up to Conrad, and looking him fiercely in the face.

‘Easy now, easy!’ said the peace-making Waley.

‘Your wife is a lady for whom I have the deepest respect,’ Jim answered calmly.

‘Respect! Confound your respect! Where is she?’

‘That’s the question,’ Coffin said.

‘Shut up, Coffin!’ Waley again interposed. ‘She isn’t your wife, anyhow.’

‘I cannot tell you where your wife is,’ Jim replied. ‘I know she is determined not to trust herself again to you.’

‘You seem to know too much about her.’

‘There are things one can’t help knowing.’

‘You helped her to get away from me?’

‘I did; and another friend, much closer and dearer to her—a woman.’

‘I know—I thought so! You hear, Waley; you hear, Coffin?’

Waley merely nodded. Coffin groaned:

‘Yes, I hear. Regular conspiracy, nothing else.’

‘Shut up, Coffin!’ Waley broke in.

‘Will you fight me like a man?’ Rose demanded of Jim.

‘We don’t fight duels in England nowadays,’ Jim answered.

‘Then, you are a coward?’

‘I don’t suppose I am any braver than other men. But I shouldn’t be a coward if I wanted to kill you. I don’t.’

‘We don’t fight duels in England nowadays!’ Rose said scoffingly. ‘You have been out of England, haven’t you—in countries where men do fight duels?’

‘I have,’ Jim answered gravely.

A thought had come up in his mind, and he was trying to turn it over.

‘Will you come to Calais, or Boulogne, or Ostend?’

Jim had had his thought out.

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘Whenever you like. To-morrow?’

‘Come, that’s all right; nothing can be fairer,’ the considerate Waley remarked, anxious to bring the whole business to any sort of compromise, or close, if only for the night.

‘But how about Lady Rose in the meantime?’ croaked Coffin.

‘Confound you!’ Waley muttered.

Rose caught at the hint.

‘Yes, what about my wife?’ he demanded. ‘You are right, Coffin. What about her? I see now the meaning of your sudden burst of courage. I should be away at Boulogne or Ostend while your pals were enabling my wife to get away from me. That’s your dodge!’

‘You have given the invitation; I accept it,’ Jim said coldly.

‘And a very fair thing,’ Waley declared.

Then Rose found himself in a dilemma. He saw no way out of it for the moment but to lose his temper and throw the rest on fate. For the moment, too, he forgot the precise nature of his bargain with Coffin; or he saw no likelihood that Jim would give him a chance of having it carried out according to the conditions.

‘You are a coward,’ he exclaimed, ‘and I couldn’t fight with you! I am a gentleman, and not a sentimental trickster! But I can chastise you, thank Heaven!’

He had a light cane in his hand, and he rushed on Jim and struck him across the face and shoulders. Jim gripped him with all his strength, and twisted the cane from his hands, and flung it across the room. Waley tried in vain to part the struggling men. Rose was tearing like a madman; Jim was perfectly composed, and was only striving to ward off the attack. At last, when he had had too much of the struggle, he gripped his arms round Rose’s waist, lifted him fairly off his feet, and threw him across the room. Rose was dashed against the opposite wall, and brought to a stand there; and there he fell, and there he lay.

‘Easy now,’ Waley said, putting a restraining hand on Jim’s chest. ‘You’re not to blame; but let him alone.’

‘I didn’t want to touch him, Waley,’ Jim replied angrily.

Then Coffin found himself confronted with the most serious dilemma of his recent career. He had based all his calculations on the understanding that Rose would provoke Conrad to make an attack on him. The moment this was done, Coffin would plunge forward to save the life of his patron. Conrad was a younger and much stronger man than Rose, and it was not to be supposed that he, Coffin, could exactly know how far Conrad might not carry his murderous purpose. Therefore, to save his friend and patron’s life from what he might well believe to be an imminent danger, what could be more natural, more pardonable, and even more praiseworthy, than that he should rush in between, and make that life certain at any cost?

‘I shall get something for it,’ he had always reasoned to himself, ‘but what will it be? Unpremeditated action—

mere defence of my friend—six months—twelve months—that sort of thing. And then there is the house in the Rue de la Paix.'

But now behold how things had fallen out! There was Rose the aggressor—Rose, who had clearly striven his best to harm Conrad—and there was Conrad, who had at last merely flung him off like a spatter, and was now standing composedly, and to all appearance with no desire to harm mortal man! Alas! how easily things go wrong!

Still, Coffin made up his mind that something must be done for the money. He had no faith in the revolver; he had the true assassin's faith in the knife. He made up his mind. He drew his knife, he sprang on Conrad, and he screamed out:

'You murderer, you want to kill my friend!' and he brandished the knife on high.

But for Coffin's one moment of hesitation, excusable, no doubt, under the suddenly altered conditions, it would probably have been all over with Jim Conrad. For nothing could have been farther from Jim's thought than to suppose that anybody, except, perhaps, Sir Francis Rose, really wanted to kill him. Therefore, he was not standing on his guard, and was not thinking about any manner of personal danger. He was only hoping that he had not done Sir Francis any serious harm in the heavy fall which he could not help giving him. But Coffin's one moment of consideration had been the ruin of Coffin's plan, for it gave Waley time to be on the watch, and to understand the situation. Just as the knife was raised he seized Coffin by the back of the collar, and dragged him away with a strength which Coffin found it hopeless to resist. He flung Coffin on the floor, and clutched both of his wrists with a tremendous grip.

‘Quick, quick!’ he called to Jim; ‘take the knife from him and open the window and call for the police.’

Rose was still lying on the floor, either stunned by the sharp fall, or not caring to rise until something definite should happen.

Waley was holding Coffin down by main strength. Suddenly an alarmed tapping of various sets of knuckles was heard at the door.

‘Tell the servants they have no business here,’ Waley called to Jim. ‘Let them send quietly for the police. You and I can hold these two here until they come.’

‘No, no, no police!’ Jim called out.

He was thinking of Clelia’s name dragged into an ignoble quarrel.

Jim opened the door and had a confused vision of the landlady and some other women, who had evidently got out of bed ‘just as they were,’ to adopt a way of expressing it which they would probably have used, and he quietly told them that there was no further danger, and that they might go to bed again.

Meanwhile, Rose had staggered to his feet. He was pale to ghastliness; he saw that the whole scheme was a failure, and that it was his own hasty action which had made the failure complete. His hate was now turned from Conrad to Coffin; he hated Coffin all the more because he had himself given to Coffin the reason for his moment of delay in decisive action.

‘Let him get up, Waley,’ Rose said imperiously. ‘We don’t want any police ferreting into all this business. Let him get up, I tell you, and let him go away. Mr. Conrad and I can settle any accounts we have to settle in our own way, without the help of you, or of Coffin, or of the police.’

‘I have no accounts to settle,’ Jim said contemptuously.

‘If any man attacks me in front I shall take good care of myself, and perhaps he may not be altogether glad of his attempt. I could have done so just now if I had suspected anything. I don’t want the police any more than Sir Francis Rose does.’

‘You had better let me get up,’ Coffin called out, struggling with his legs on the floor, and striving with all his might and main to lift Waley from off his chest.

He could not manage it, however.

‘Let him get up, Waley,’ Jim said; ‘let us have an end of all this one way or another.’

‘Have you got the knife?’ Waley asked eagerly.

‘Yes, I’ve got the knife safe enough. Let him get up.’ Waley rose to his feet.

‘Get up, you murdering ruffian!’ he said.

And in rising he gave Coffin a contemptuous touch of his foot.

‘I don’t want to do anybody any harm,’ Coffin murmured, with bated breath. ‘Thought that chap was going to kill my friend—lost my temper, that’s all.’

‘Your friend, you infernal bungling coward!’ Rose cried. ‘You don’t want to do anyone any harm? No, of course you don’t. Take that!’

And he struck Coffin a violent blow on the face.

Coffin saw that the game was up, so far as he was concerned; the chance of the house in the Rue de la Paix was utterly gone.

He was seized with all the fury of despair.

‘Look here, Mr. Conrad and Mr. Waley,’ he exclaimed, ‘that man who has hit me—that man engaged me to kill Mr. Conrad! It’s a put-up job, I tell you. Let him deny it if he dares.’

Rose endeavoured to strike at him again, but Waley

threw his stalwart form between them, and held Rose off. Rose mastered himself once again. He turned away with a swagger, and said :

‘You all appear to be such good friends that I don’t seem as if I ought to intrude on so charming a comradeship any longer. I shall recover my wife in spite of you all. Good-night, gentlemen!’

Then he turned and left the room, and they heard him moving to the stairs. But there was a noise below, of heavy footsteps.

‘By Jove! they have sent for the police,’ Waley said. ‘They were right, and I’m awfully glad of it.’

Rose came rushing back into the room. Before any of them could guess what he meant to do, he had thrown up the window.

‘I am not going to be caught in your infernal trap,’ he cried; and he strode into the balcony, climbed over the railing, and dropped into the street below. Conrad and Waley ran to the window; Coffin remained where he was, wholly impassive now. A heavy fall was heard, and then a faint, low moaning. Rose had evidently in his passion miscalculated the depth of the descent. No sound of flying feet was heard, only the low moaning, like that of some stunned and wounded animal.

‘I’m afraid he has done for himself now,’ Waley said, with a deep note of pity and of grief in his voice.

‘I am afraid he has,’ Jim echoed; and there was horror in his heart.

‘Serve him right!’ growled the funeral voice of Coffin. ‘Why did he break his bargain?’

Then the police came in, and there were a few rapid words of explanation; and Jim and Waley went down to the street with the officers. Sir Francis Rose was lying

with his head and one arm terribly fractured. He had evidently cannoned against something in his fall, and come head downwards on to the pavement.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE RING RETURNED.

THE long anxious hours of the night wore themselves away. Rose had been carefully lifted up, and tenderly carried to Jim's room and stretched upon Jim's bed. A doctor and a surgeon were sent for. Both agreed that Rose could not then be removed to his own home or to any hospital. Both seemed to be of opinion that there would be no need of any intermediate removal. Rose had been terribly injured on the head.

The police soon left the place, having taken the names of all those present with a view to a probable inquest. Mr. Coffin, having given his name, had quietly left the sitting-room and descended the stairs and disappeared, never to appear again, so far as this story is concerned. Jim and Waley both 'spotted' him, to use Waley's phrase, as he was making off; neither had the faintest idea of detaining him. To what end should he be detained? The less said about the whole tragedy the better. Jim was thinking of Clelia; Waley was thinking of the chief, for whom he once had such admiration—for whom he had still so much regret.

For a long time Rose was insensible. He merely kept moaning on; but for the moaning, the listeners could hardly have known whether he was alive or dead. The surgeon found that his brain was pressed upon by a fragment of bone, and after a while a successful operation

relieved the patient from that oppression, and he recovered his senses, and even his spirits, and he made inquiry about himself in quite a cheery sort of way :

‘ A question of days, doctor, or a question of hours ?’

‘ A question of hours, I am afraid.’

‘ Well,’ he murmured in a low tone, ‘ one must die at one hour or another. Odd how true it is, that old story, that nobody ever believes it of himself! I never believed that anything could kill me ; now I tumble off a balcony, by mere accident, and, lo and behold, I kill myself.’

Even then Rose had his wits about him enough to do his best to set the belief going that his impending death was but the result of a commonplace sort of accident.

The morning came, first pallid and then roseate. Meanwhile, at the urgent recommendation of Jim Conrad, the doctor—whose close services were not then needed—had gone to seek Lady Rose. He took with him a few lines from Conrad, simply asking her to put herself in the hands of the doctor, and announcing that Sir Francis was lying dangerously ill. It was agreed among them all that the doctor was the best messenger who could be charged with such an errand, and he was quite willing to undertake the mission.

About eight o’clock Rose turned to the surgeon, who was alone in the room with him, and quietly said :

‘ I have an odd fancy—I should like to see my wife, Lady Rose. I don’t know where she is just now, but I dare say Mr. Conrad could tell you.’

‘ I know where she is,’ was the quiet answer.

‘ You do—yes ? Where is she ?’

‘ She is here.’

And in a moment he had left the room, and Clelia had entered it, and was standing by the bed.

‘Come near me, Clelia,’ he whispered; ‘come nearer—nearer—quite near.’

She drew close to him, and bent over him, her heart beating, the tears standing in her eyes. The end was coming. She felt for a moment as if it might be the end of the world.

‘Clelia, do you forgive me—do you forgive me all?’

The whole past came back upon her. In the sudden light of consciousness illumined by that flash of memory, she saw her girlhood and her youth—her hero-worship and her strong love. And there beneath her, just about to die, was her first love and her husband. All the wrong, the quarrel, the stain, the shame, passed out of her mind, and she could only remember Francis Rose as her first love and the husband of her youth.

‘Oh, Francisco!’ she murmured, ‘God knows how truly I forgive you! Oh, I forgive you with all my heart, and with all my soul and all my strength. Forgive you! forgive you!’

And she stooped down and kissed him on the forehead, compassionately, tenderly.

He turned as if a little wearily.

‘That’s all right,’ he said, cheerily enough. ‘And I forgive you, Clelia.’

She drew back a little, shocked and pained. For with the forgiving words from him the memory of her wrongs came back to her. It is very sweet to be forgiven when one is conscious of having done wrong, but to be forgiven when one has strained the most generous faculties of one’s nature is a little hard, even at a death-bed.

‘You forgive me?’ she asked—‘for what?’

And then she felt compunction for having put such a question to a dying man.

Sir Francis smiled a quiet, amused smile—distinctly amused, although he was dying. It was so like a woman, he thought, to put such a question.

‘I forgive you, Clelia,’ he said, ‘for having been all through your life too good for me, and so making me think that we couldn’t get on together. That’s all I have to forgive you for; but it’s a great deal, dear girl! for a bad lot like me. One gets tired of finding his wife always too good for him. Do you know, I was rather glad, on the whole, to find that you had enough of the world, and the flesh, and the devil in you to let that other fellow fall in love with you!’

She had been kneeling beside him. Now she rose up.

‘Must we part like this?’ she said. ‘Oh, Frank! do not let us part like—like this.’

Then there was a pause. The current of his thoughts seemed to have changed. He spoke abruptly, his voice still quite clear:

‘Don’t you trouble about me, Clelia. The whole thing was my fault; I know that well enough. But I couldn’t help myself. And I’m not a bit sorry to be going off. I have muddled things in this world. So I want a new sensation. I have got pretty well all that is to be got out of this world, and, do you know, I am greatly interested in the idea of some quite new and fresh experience. I wonder what it will be like?’

‘Oh, Frank,’ she pleaded passionately, ‘don’t talk like that! Oh, don’t, don’t! it’s all so serious—so terrible.’

‘Serious? terrible? No, I don’t think so. Anyhow, I want to find out what it is all about. I tell you, Clelia, I want a new start. Don’t you trouble about me.’

‘Oh!’ she exclaimed under her breath, and she tossed her head impatiently.

She strove that he should not see it, but she could not help her impatience. To see him meet death in this sort of spirit! To think that he could feel no more than that! Only a vague curiosity and a desire for some manner of new sensation!

There was another pause. Then he asked, in tones less clear and more gasping than before:

‘Clelia, did you ever get back that ring?’

‘Yes, Frank,’ she said softly.

‘He gave it to you?’

‘Yes—oh yes; it was mine; and, of course, when he knew that he gave it back to me.’

‘Have you it now—with you here?’

‘Oh yes.’

‘Would you mind giving it back to me, Clelia? I have a fancy that I should like to carry it with me—to put it out of your way for ever. Then, you can forget, if you like, that I ever threw you away, and that you ever threw the poor old ring away, and so we are quits. Do you see the idea?’

She was not wearing the ring. She had it in a little purse which she carried in her pocket. She found the purse and took out the ring. It was a strange thought that came into her mind just then: the thought of how methodical it all was, how formal it was, how that which might have been strange and thrilling if one were to read it described in a novel seemed so much a matter of course here and now—between life and death.

She had given up all hope of prevailing on him to take death seriously. He could not, he would not; he was still acting a play.

‘Oh,’ she thought, with a rush of pity and compassion flooding through her heart, ‘if, after all, that was his nature, if he could not help it, if play-acting throughout

life was his doom and not his choice, then may that be to his account with the Power which will not misjudge him as I have misjudged him! Ah, who made him a play-actor, after all? and shall he not find pity and pardon?"

So she put the ring upon his finger.

His eyes had been closed. He opened them and smiled.

'Suppose it turned out to be a talisman,' he said—'a kind of emblem of forgiveness? Well, anyhow, I'll take it with me—as far as I can. Oh, don't you cry, Clelia! I have had a good time in this world. I got almost everything I wanted, and now I leave you to have a good time. You can marry your friend.'

'Oh, for pity's sake,' she pleaded, 'don't say things like that!'

'Why not? Why shouldn't you marry him? He is awfully fond of you—I found out that—and I don't see why you should not be fond of him. I never gave you a fair chance of keeping on being fond of me. I don't mind your marrying him. Clelia, will you kiss me on the lips—on the lips?'

She stooped silently over him and kissed him.

'Do you know, Clelia, I felt that kiss delightful. I think this is the most interesting hour to me of all our married life—yes, the most interesting by far. Wasn't there some great Roman who, when he was dying, said to his friends that he felt himself turning into a god?—wasn't there? wasn't there?'

He rolled his head upon the pillow, and looked eagerly into her dimming eyes with his eyes quick-glancing, and seeming to have a sudden ray of new life in them.

'I think there was. I don't know—I am not sure. Why should we think of such things now?'

'Because I feel so like all that. I am longing for the

new experience—the other world ; but it is a delight to linger just this moment with you. Come, I think you will admit that I am meeting death like a man, and a North-Country man. Will you kiss me again ?

She was bending her lips towards him, when he suddenly drew away.

‘No,’ he murmured faintly ; ‘it would only spoil the effect. Such a sensation could never be reproduced. Once, and only once, for a moment like that ! Nothing now left but the other sensation—the other quite new sensation—the world elsewhere !’

Then he turned his head slightly away, and his eyes closed again. A complete silence reigned all round. Clelia was as much the victim of a new sensation as any that could meet her husband in the far world to which he was yearning to go. She was terrified—horrified—by his way of encountering death. She had, even in her limited experience, looked on death before, but never on such a death as this—never a death that was treated by the dying mortal as a new and dramatic experience, as the curious and interesting prelude to yet more strange, and perhaps even more interesting, experiences !

This was indeed a way of looking at things which was shocking to a woman with the nature and the feelings of Clelia Vine. There was something ghastly, something that oppressed her with a sense of the unnatural, and even the diabolic, about it. She gazed on the face of the dying man as she might, in another age, have gazed on the face of one possessed by a demon—the face of one in whom any supernatural or subnatural transformation might be expected. And, meanwhile, the face of the dying man was, in its expression, calm, composed, and sweet as the placid countenance of a sinking saint.

There is not much left to tell. The inquest was held, and ended only in a verdict of 'Accidental death,' although it was described in the papers as 'The Clarges Street Mystery.' There had been a quarrel—blows were interchanged. The police had been brought in by the people of the house. Sir Francis Rose, dreading to have his family name mixed up in any such affair, had in a moment of impulse tried to get out by the window, and missed his mark and fallen on the pavement. All that happened was truly told, only the cause of the quarrel did not come out. It had, indeed, nothing to do with the question for the coroner's jury.

The passages taken for New York were merely transferred to another boat. Clelia and Gertrude went out to New York, and Gertrude concerned herself there and elsewhere in America with the cause of woman's true advancement. She carried the flag, with Clelia in the quiet background, out to San Francisco, and up to Lake Superior, and down to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. Conrad did not see either of them before they left. It was understood that he should hear from them—some time.

Waley went abroad on some enterprise to South America. He pressed Conrad to go with him, but Conrad remained in Europe, and wandered about there aimlessly for a long time. He could not pull himself together all at once. He gave himself a loose rein and went his way, dreaming of brighter days to come—which days came.

He heard news of Clelia at last. Gertrude wrote to him, and then Clelia, too, wrote to him—and more than a year passed before they three met once again. They met at Venice, and there Jim and Clelia were married. Then Clelia and Jim proposed to travel slowly on to

Egypt. Gertrude took leave of them bravely. She meant to return for awhile to the United States, where she seemed to see a wide sphere of influence opening before her.

‘I ought to be very happy,’ she said. ‘Until now I have had only a sister; now I have a sister and a brother.’

She kissed Clelia fondly, and Clelia returned her kisses.

‘Now,’ murmured Clelia, her eyes glancing in tears, ‘kiss your brother, Gertrude.’

And Gertrude put her arm timidly, tenderly, on Jim’s shoulder, and drew him down to her and kissed him.

And Jim’s novel? It will be finished, perhaps, some time. If not, the world will still go on—there are so many novels nowadays! But both Jim and Clelia are resolved that he shall not live a useless life—that he shall be ‘not a shadow among shadows, but a man among men.’

THE END.





LIST OF BOOKS PUBLISHED BY
CHATTO & WINDUS

111 ST. MARTIN'S LANE, CHARING CROSS, LONDON, W.C.

About (Edmond).—The Fellaḥ: An Egyptian Novel. Translated by Sir RANDAL ROBERTS. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Adams (W. Davenport), Works by.

A Dictionary of the Drama: being a comprehensive Guide to the Plays, Playwrights, Players and Playhouses of the United Kingdom and America, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day. Crown 8vo, half-bound, 12s. 6d. [Preparing.]

Quips and Quiddities. Selected by W. DAVENPORT ADAMS. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Agony Column (The) of 'The Times,' from 1800 to 1870. Edited, with an Introduction, by ALICE CLAY. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Aidé (Hamilton), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
Carr of Carryon. | Confidencas.

Albert (Mary).—Brooke Finchley's Daughter. Post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Alden (W. L.).—A Lost Soul: Being the Confession and Defence of Charles Lindsay. Fcap. 8vo, cloth boards, 1s. 6d.

Alexander (Mrs.), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
Maid, Wife, or Widow? | Valerie's Fate. | Blind Fate.

A Life Interast. | **Mona's Choice.** | **By Woman's Wit.**
Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

Allen (F. M.).—Green as Grass. With a Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Allen (Grant), Works by.

The Evolutionist at Large. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.
Post-Frandal Philosophy. Crown 8vo, art linen, 3s. 6d.
Moorland Idylls. Crown 8vo, cloth decorated, 6s.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Babylon. 12 Illustrations.	The Devil's Dia.	The Duchess of Powysland.
Strange Stories. Frontis.	This Mortal Coil.	Blood Royal.
The Beckoning Hand.	The Tanta of Shem. Frontis.	Ivan Great's Masterpiece.
For Maimie's Sake.	The Great Taboo.	The Scallywag. 24 illust.
Phyllida. In all Shades	Dumaresq's Daughter.	At Market Value.

Under Sealed Orders. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Dr. Fallisar's Patient. Fcap. 8vo, cloth boards, 1s. 6d.

Anderson (Mary).—Othello's Occupation: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Arnold (Edwin Lester), Stories by.

The Wonderful Adventures of Phra the Phœnician. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with 12 Illustrations by H. M. PAGET, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

The Constable of St. Nicholas. With Frontispiece by S. L. WOOD. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Artemus Ward's Works. With Portrait and Facsimile. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.—Also a POPULAR EDITION, post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.

Ashton (John), Works by. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d. each.

History of the Chap-Books of the 18th Century. With 334 Illustrations
Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne. With 85 Illustrations.
Humour, Wit, and Satire of the Seventeenth Century. With 82 Illustrations.
English Caricature and Satire on Napoleon the First. With 115 Illustrations.
Modern Street Ballads. With 57 Illustrations.

Bacteria, Yeast Fungi, and Allied Species, A Synopsis of. By

W. B. GROVE, B.A. With 87 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Bardsley (Rev. C. Wareing, M.A.), Works by.

English Surnames: Their Sources and Significations. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.
Curiosities of Puritan Nomenclature. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Baring Gould (Sabine, Author of 'John Herring,' &c), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Red Spider.

Evo.

Barr (Robert: Luke Sharp), Stories by. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d. each.

In a Steamer Chair. With Frontispiece and Vignette by DEMAIN HAMMOND.
From Whose Bourne, &c. With 47 Illustrations by HAL HURST and others.

A Woman Intervenes. With 8 Illustrations by HAL HURST. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.
Revenge! With 12 Illustrations by LANCELOT SPRED, &c. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Barrett (Frank), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth, 2s. 6d. each.

Fettered for Life.
The Sin of Olga Zassoulch.
Between Life and Death.
Folly Morrison. | **Honest Davie.**
Little Lady Linton.

A Prodigal's Progress.
John Ford; and His Helpmate.
A Recalling Vengeance.
Lieut. Barnabas. | **Found Guilty.**
For Love and Honour.

The Woman of the Iron Bracelets. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, boards, 2s.; cl. limp, 2s. 6d.
 Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

The Harding Scandal.

A Missing Witness. With Eight Illustrations by W. H. MARGETSON.

[April]

Barrett (Joan).—Monte Carlo Stories. Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 1s. 6d.

Beaconsfield, Lord. By T. P. O'CONNOR, M.P. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Beauchamp (Shelsley).—Grantley Grange. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Beautiful Pictures by British Artists: A Gathering of Favourites

from the Picture Galleries, engraved on Steel. Imperial 4to, cloth extra, gilt edges, 21s.

Besant (Sir Walter) and James Rice, Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Ready-Money Mortiboy.

By Celia's Arbour.

My Little Girl.

The Chaplain of the Fleet.

With Harp and Crown.

The Seamy Side.

This Son of Vulcan.

The Case of Mr. Lucraft, &c.

The Golden Butterfly.

'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay, &c.

The Monks of Thelema.

The Ten Years' Tenant, &c.

*. There is also a LIBRARY EDITION of the above Twelve Volumes, handsomely set in new type on a large crown 8vo page, and bound in cloth extra, 6s. each; and a POPULAR EDITION of **The Golden Butterfly**, medium 8vo, 6d.; cloth, 1s.—NEW EDITIONS, printed in large type on crown 8vo laid paper, bound in figured cloth, 3s. 6d. each, are also in course of publication.

Besant (Sir Walter), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

All Sorts and Conditions of Men. With 12 Illustrations by FRED. BARNARD

The Captain's Room, &c. With Frontispiece by E. J. WHEELER.

All in a Garden Fair. With 6 Illustrations by HARRY FURNISS.

Dorothy Forster. With Frontispiece by CHARLES GREEN.

Uncle Jack, and other Stories. | **Children of Gibeon.**

The World Went Very Well Then. With 12 Illustrations by A. FORESTIER.

Herr Paulus: His Rise, his Greatness, and his Fall. | **The Bell of St. Paul's.**

For Faith and Freedom. With Illustrations by A. FORESTIER and F. WADDY.

To Call Her Mine, &c. With 9 Illustrations by A. FORESTIER.

The Holy Rose, &c. With Frontispiece by F. BARNARD.

Armored of Lyonsse: A Romance of To-day With 12 Illustrations by F. BARNARD.

St. Katherine's by the Tower. With 12 Illustrations by C. GREEN.

Verbena Camellia Stephanotis, &c. With a Frontispiece by GORDON BROWNE.

The Ivory Gate. | **The Rebel Queen.**

Beyond the Dreams of Avarice. With 12 Illustrations by W. H. HYDE.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

In Deacon's Orders, &c. With Frontispiece by A. FORESTIER.

The Revolt of Man. | **The Master Craftsman.**

[May]

The City of Refuge. 3 vols., crown 8vo, 15s. net.

The Charm, and other Drawing-room Plays. By SIR WALTER BESANT and WALTER H. POLLOCK.

With 50 Illustrations by CHRIS HAMMOND and JULE GOODMAN. Crown 8vo, cloth, gilt edges, 6s.

Fifty Years Ago. With 144 Plates and Woodcuts. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

The Eulogy of Richard Jefferies. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

London. With 125 Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Westminster. With Etched Frontispiece by F. S. WALKER, R.P.E., and 130 Illustrations by

WILLIAM PATTEN and others. Demy 8vo, cloth, 18s.

Sir Richard Whittington. With Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, art linen, 3s. 6d.

Gaspard de Colligny. With a Portrait. Crown 8vo, art linen, 3s. 6d.

Bechstein (Ludwig).—As Pretty as Seven, and other German Stories. With Additional Tales by the Brothers GRIMM, and 98 Illustrations by RICHTER. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. 6d.; gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

Bellew (Frank).—The Art of Amusing: A Collection of Graceful Arts, Games, Tricks, Puzzles, and Charades. With 300 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d.

Bennett (W. C., LL.D.).—Songs for Sailors. Post 8vo, cl. limp, 2s.

Bewick (Thomas) and his Pupils. By AUSTIN DOBSON. With 95 Illustrations. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Bierce (Ambrose).—In the Midst of Life: Tales of Soldiers and Civilians. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Bill Nye's History of the United States. With 146 Illustrations by F. ÖPPER. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Biré (Edmond).—Diary of a Citizen of Paris during 'The Terror.' Translated and Edited by JOHN DE VILLIERS. With 2 Photogravure Portraits. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 2s.

Blackburn's (Henry) Art Handbooks.

Academy Notes, 1875, 1877-88, 1889, 1890, 1892-1898, Illustrated, each 1s.

Academy Notes, 1897. 1s. [*May.*]

Academy Notes, 1875-79. Complete in

One Vol., with 600 Illustrations. Cloth, 6s.

Academy Notes, 1880-84. Complete in

One Vol., with 700 Illustrations. Cloth, 6s.

Academy Notes, 1890-94. Complete in

One Vol., with 800 Illustrations. Cloth, 7s. 6d.

Grosvenor Notes, 1877. 6d.

Grosvenor Notes, separate years from

1878-1890, each 1s.

Grosvenor Notes, Vol. I., 1877-82. With

300 Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Grosvenor Notes, Vol. II., 1882-87. With

300 Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Grosvenor Notes, Vol. III., 1888-90. With

230 Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

The New Gallery, 1888-1895. With numerous

Illustrations, each 1s.

The New Gallery, 1888-1882. With 250

Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth, 6s.

English Pictures at the National Gallery.

With 114 Illustrations. 1s.

Old Masters at the National Gallery.

With 128 Illustrations. 1s. 6d.

Illustrated Catalogue to the National

Gallery. With 242 Illusts. Demy 8vo, cloth, 3s.

The Illustrated Catalogue of the Paris Salon, 1897. With 300 Sketches. 3s. [*May.*]

Blind (Mathilde), Poems by.

The Ascent of Man. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Dramæ in Miniature. With a Frontispiece by F. MADOX BROWN. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Songs and Sonnets. Fcap. 8vo, vellum and gold, 5s.

Birds of Passage: Songs of the Orient and Occident. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, linen, 6s. net.

Bourget (Paul).—A Living Lie. Translated by JOHN DE VILLIERS.

With special Preface for the English Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Bourne (H. R. Fox), Books by.

English Merchants: Memoirs in Illustration of the Progress of British Commerce. With numerous

Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

English Newspapers: Chapters in the History of Journalism. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 2s.

The Other Side of the Emlin Pasha Relief Expedition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Bowers (George).—Leaves from a Hunting Journal. Coloured

Plates. Oblong folio, half-bound, 21s.

Boyle (Frederick), Works by. Post 8vo, illustrated bds., 2s. each.

Chronicles of No-Man's Land. | Camp Notes. | Savage Life.

Brand (John).—Observations on Popular Antiquities; chiefly

illustrating the Origin of our Vulgar Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstitions. With the Additions of Sir

HENRY ELLIS, and numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Brewer (Rev. Dr.), Works by.

The Reader's Handbook of Allusions, References, Plots, and Stories. Eighteenth

Thousand. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Authors and their Works, with the Dates: Being the Appendices to 'The Reader's Hand-

book,' separately printed. Crown 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

A Dictionary of Miracles. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Brewster (Sir David), Works by. Post 8vo, cloth, 4s. 6d. each.

More Worlds than One: Creed of the Philosopher and Hope of the Christian. With Plates.

The Martyrs of Science: GALILEO, TYCHO BRAHE, and KEPLER. With Portraits.

Letters on Natural Magic. With numerous Illustrations.

Brillat-Savarin.—Gastronomy as a Fine Art. Translated by

R. E. ANDERSON, M.A. Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.

Brydges (Harold).—Uncle Sam at Home. With 91 Illustrations.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Buchanan (Robert), Novels, &c., by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; pos 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Shadow of the Sword.
A Child of Nature. With Frontispiece.
God and the Man. With 11 Illustrations by
 FRED. BARNARD.
The Martyrdom of Madeline. With
 Frontispiece by A. W. COOPER.

Love Me for Ever. With Frontispiece.
Annen Water. | **Foxglove Manor.**
The New Abelard. | **Rachel Dene.**
Matt; A Story of a Caravan. With Frontispiece.
The Master of the Mine. With Frontispiece.
The Heir of Linne. | **Woman and the Man.**

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

Red and White Heather.**Lady Kilpatrick.****The Wandering Jew:** a Christmas Carol. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.**The Charlatan.** By ROBERT BUCHANAN and HENRY MURRAY. Crown 8vo, cloth, with a Frontispiece by T. H. ROBINSON, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.**Burton (Richard F.).—The Book of the Sword.** With over 400 Illustrations. Demy 4to, cloth extra, 32s.**Burton (Robert).—The Anatomy of Melancholy.** With Translations of the Quotations. Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.**Melancholy Anatomised:** An Abridgment of BURTON'S ANATOMY. Post 8vo, half-hd., 2s. 6d.**Caine (T. Hall), Novels by.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.**The Shadow of a Crime.** | **A Son of Hagar.** | **The Deemster.**Also a LIBRARY EDITION of **The Deemster**, set in new type, crown 8vo, cloth decorated, 6s.**Cameron (Commander V. Lovett).—The Cruise of the 'Black Prince' Privateer.** Post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.**Cameron (Mrs. H. Lovett), Novels by.** Post 8vo, illust. hds. 2s. ea. **Juliet's Guardian.** | **Deceivers Ever.****Captain Colignet, Soldier of the Empire: An Autobiography.** Edited by LOREDAN L'ARCHEY. Translated by Mrs. CAREY. With 100 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.**Carlyle (Jane Welsh), Life of.** By Mrs. ALEXANDER IRELAND. With Portrait and Facsimile Letter. Small demy 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.**Carlyle (Thomas).—On the Choice of Books.** Post 8vo, cl., 1s. 6d. **Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and R. W. Emerson, 1834-1872.** Edited by C. E. NORTON. With Portraits. Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth, 24s.**Carruth (Hayden).—The Adventures of Jones.** With 17 Illustrations. Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 2s.**Chambers (Robert W.), Stories of Paris Life by.** Long fcap. 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. each.**The King in Yellow.****In the Quarter.****Chapman's (George), Works.** Vol. I., Plays Complete, including the Doubtful Ones.—Vol. II., Poems and Minor Translations, with Essay by A. C. SWINBURNE.—Vol. III., Translations of the Iliad and Odyssey. Three Vols., crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.**Chapple (J. Mitchell).—The Minor Chord: The Story of a Prima Donna.** Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.**Chatto (W. A.) and J. Jackson.—A Treatise on Wood Engraving,** Historical and Practical. With Chapter by H. G. BOHN, and 450 fine illustrs. Large 4to, half-leather, 28s.**Chaucer for Children: A Golden Key.** By Mrs. H. R. HAWES. With 8 Coloured Plates and 30 Woodcuts. Crown 4to, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.**Chaucer for Schools.** By Mrs. H. R. HAWES. Demy 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.**Chess, The Laws and Practice of.** With an Analysis of the Openings. By HOWARD STAUNTON. Edited by R. B. WORMALD. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.**The Minor Tactics of Chess: A Treatise on the Deployment of the Forces in obedience to Strategic Principle.** By F. K. YOUNG and E. C. HOWELL. Long fcap. 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.**The Hastings Chess Tournament.** Containing the Authorised Account of the 230 Games played Aug.-Sept., 1895. With Annotations by PILLSBURY, LASKER, TARRASCH, STEINITZ, SCHIFFERS, TRICHMANN, BARDELEBEN, BLACKBURNE, GUNSBURG, TINSLEY, MASON, and ALBIN; Biographical Sketches of the Chess Masters, and 22 Portraits. Edited by H. F. CHESHIRE. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.**Clare (Austin).—For the Love of a Lass.** Post 8vo, 2s.; cl., 2s. 6d.

Clive (Mrs. Archer), Novels by. Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s. each.
Paul Ferroll. | Why Paul Ferroll Killed his Wife.

Clodd (Edward, F.R.A.S.).—Myths and Dreams. Cr. 8vo, 3s. 6d.

Cobban (J. Maclaren), Novels by.

The Cure of Soufa. Post 8vo, Illustrated boards, 2s.

The Red Sultan. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

The Burden of Isahel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Coleman (John).—Curly: An Actor's Story. With 21 Illustrations
by J. C. DOLLMAN. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.

Coleridge (M. E.).—The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. Cloth, 1s. 6d.

Collins (C. Allston).—The Bar Sinister. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Collins (John Churton, M.A.), Books by.

Illustrations of Tennyson. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Jonathan Swift: A Biographical and Critical Study. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 8s.

Collins (Mortimer and Frances), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

From Midnight to Midnight.

Blackemith and Scholar.

Transmigration.

You Play me False.

The Village Comedy.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Sweet Anne Page. | A Fight with Fortune. | Sweet and Twenty. | Frances.

Collins (Wilkie), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, many illustrated, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s. each;
cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

*Antonina.

*Basil.

*Hide and Seek.

*The Woman in White.

*The Moonstone.

After Dark.

The Dead Secret.

The Queen of Hearts.

No Name.

My Miscellanies.

* * * Marked * are the NEW LIBRARY EDITION at 3s. 6d., entirely reset and bound in new style.

Armada.

Man and Wife.

Poor Miss Finch.

Miss or Mrs. ?

The New Magdalen.

The Frozen Deep.

The Lew and the Lady.

The Two Destinies.

The Haunted Hotel.

The Fallen Leaves.

Jezebel's Daughter.

The Black Robe.

Heart and Science.

'I Say No.'

A Rogue's Life.

The Evil Genius.

Little Novels.

The Legacy of Cain.

Blind Love.

POPULAR EDITIONS. Medium 8vo, 6d. each; cloth, 1s. each.

The Woman in White. |

The Moonstone. |

Antonina.

The Woman in White and The Moonstone in One Volume, medium 8vo, cloth, 2s.

Colman's (George) Humorous Works: 'Broad Grins,' 'My Night-gown and Slippers,' &c. With Life and Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Colquhoun (M. J.).—Every Inch a Soldier. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Colt-breaking, Hints on. By W. M. HUTCHISON. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d.

Convalescent Cookery. By CATHERINE RYAN. Cr. 8vo, 1s.; cl., 1s. 6d.

Conway (Moncure D.), Works by.

Demonology and Devil-Lore. With 65 Illustrations. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 28s.

George Washington's Rules of Civility. Fcap. 8vo, Japanese vellum, 2s. 6d.

Cook (Dutton), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Leo.

Paul Foster's Daughter.

Cooper (Edward H.).—Geoffroy Hamilton. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Cornwall.—Popular Romances of the West of England; or, The Drells, Traditions, and Superstitions of Old Cornwall. Collected by ROBERT HUNT, F.R.S. With two Steel Plates by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.

Cotes (V. Cecil).—Two Girls on a Barge. With 44 Illustrations by F. H. TOWNSEND. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.

Craddock (C. Egbert), Stories by.

The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

His Vanished Star. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Cram (Ralph Adams).—Black Spirits and White. Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 6s. 6d.

Crellin (H. N.) Books by.

Romance of the Old Saragolla. With 28 Illustrations by S. L. WOOD. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.
Tales of the Caliph. Crown 8vo, cloth, 2s.
The Nazarene: A Drama. Crown 8vo, 1s.

Crim (Matt.).—Adventures of a Fair Rebel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with a Frontispiece by DAN. BEARD, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Crockett (S. R.) and others.—Tales of Our Coast. By S. R. CROCKETT, GILBERT PARKER, HAROLD FREDERIC, 'O.' and W. CLARK RUSSELL. With 12 Illustrations by FRANK BRANGWYN. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Croker (Mrs. B. M.), Novels by. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Pretty Miss Neville.	Diana Barrington.	A Family Likeness.
A Bird of Passage.	Proper Pride.	'To Let.'
Village Tales and Jungle Tragedies.	Two Masters.	Mr. Jervis.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

Married or Single?
The Real Lady Hilda.

In the Kingdom of Kerry.

Beyond the Pale. Crown 8vo, buckram, 6s.

Cruikshank's Comic Almanack. Complete in Two SERIES: The

FIRST, from 1835 to 1843; the SECOND, from 1844 to 1853. A Gathering of the Best Humour of THACKERAY, HOOD, MAYHEW, ALBERT SMITH, A'BECKETT, ROBERT BROUGH, &c. With numerous Steel Engravings and Woodcuts by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK, HINE, LANDELLS, &c. Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 7s. 6d. each.

The Life of George Cruikshank. By BLANCHARD JBRROLD. With 84 Illustrations and a Bibliography. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Cumming (C. F. Gordon), Works by. Demy 8vo, cl. ex., 8s. 6d. ea.

In the Hebrides. With an Autotype Frontispiece and 23 Illustrations.
In the Himalayas and on the Indian Plains. With 42 Illustrations.
Two Happy Years in Ceylon. With 28 Illustrations.

Via Cornwall to Egypt. With a Photogravure Frontispiece. Demy 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.

Cussans (John E.).—A Handbook of Heraldry; with Instructions for Tracing Pedigrees and Deciphering Ancient MSS., &c. Fourth Edition, revised, with 408 Woodcuts and 2 Coloured Plates. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Cyyles (W.).—Hearts of Gold. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, bds., 2s.

Daudet (Alphonse).—The Evangelist; or, Port Salvation. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Davenant (Francis, M.A.).—Hints for Parents on the Choice of a Profession for their Sons when Starting in Life. Crown 8vo, cloth, 1s. 6d.

Davidson (Hugh Coleman).—Mr. Sadler's Daughters. With a Frontispiece by STANLEY WOOD. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Davies (Dr. N. E. Yorke-), Works by. Cr. 8vo, 1s. ea.; cl., 1s. 6d. ea.

One Thousand Medical Maxims and Surgical Hints.
Nursery Hints: A Mother's Guide in Health and Disease.
Food for the Fat: A Treatise on Corpulency, and a Dietary for its Cure.

Aids to Long Life. Crown 8vo, 2s.; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Davies' (Sir John) Complete Poetical Works. Collected and Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by Rev. A. B. GROSART, D.D. | Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

Dawson (Erasmus, M.B.).—The Fountain of Youth. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Two Illustrations by HUME NISBET, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

De Guerin (Maurice), The Journal of. Edited by G. S. TREBUTIEN. With a Memoir by SAINTE-BEUVE. Translated from the 20th French Edition by JESSIE P. FROTH INGHAM. Fcap. 8vo, half-bound, 2s. 6d.

De Maistre (Xavier).—A Journey Round my Room. Translated by Sir HENRY ATTWELL. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

De Mille (James).—A Castle in Spain. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with a Frontispiece, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Derby (The): The Blue Ribbon of the Turf. With Brief Accounts of THE OAKS. By LOUIS HENRY CURZON. Crown 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Derwent (Leith), Novels by. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d. ea.; post 8vo, 2s. ea.
Our Lady of Tears. | **Circe's Lover.**

Dewar (T. R.).—A Ramble Round the Globe. With 220 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Dickens (Charles).—Sketches by Boz. Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s.

About England with Dickens. By ALFRED RIMMER. With 57 Illustrations by C. A. VANDERHOOF, ALFRED RIMMER, and others. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Dictionaries.

A Dictionary of Miracles: Imitative, Realistic, and Dogmatic. By the Rev. E. C. BREWER, L.L.D. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

The Reader's Handbook of Allusions, References, Plots, and Stories. By the Rev. E. C. BREWER, L.L.D. With an ENGLISH BIBLIOGRAPHY. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Authors and their Works, with the Dates. Crown 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Familiar Short Sayings of Great Men. With Historical and Explanatory Notes by SAMUEL A. BENT, A.M. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

The Slang Dictionary: Etymological, Historical, and Anecdotal. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s. 6d.

Words, Facts, and Phrases: A Dictionary of Curious, Quaint, and Out-of-the-Way Matters. By ELIEZER EDWARDS. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Diderot.—The Paradox of Acting. Translated, with Notes, by WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK. With Preface by Sir HENRY IRVING. Crown 8vo, parchment, 4s. 6d.

Dobson (Austin), Works by.

Thomas Bewick and his Pupils. With 95 Illustrations. Square 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Four Frenchwomen. With Four Portraits. Crown 8vo, buckram, gilt top 6s.

Eighteenth Century Vignettes. IN THREE SERIES. Crown 8vo, buckram, 6s. each.

Dobson (W. T.).—Poetical Ingeniuties and Eccentricities. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Donovan (Dick), Detective Stories by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

The Man-Hunter. | **Wanted!**
Caught at Last.
Tracked and Taken.
Who Poisoned Hetty Duncan?
Suspicion Aroused.

A Detective's Triumphs.
In the Grip of the Law.
From Information Received.
Link by Link. | **Dark Deeds.**
Riddles Read.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth, 2s. 6d. each.

The Man from Manchester. With 23 Illustrations.

Tracked to Doom. With Six full-page Illustrations by GORDON BROWNE.

The Mystery of Jamaica Terrace.

The Chronicles of Michael Danevitch, of the Russian Secret Service. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. [Shortly.]

Doyle (A. Conan).—The Firm of Girdlestone. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d.

Dramatists, The Old. Cr. 8vo, cl. ex., with Portraits, 3s. 6d. per Vol.

Ben Jonson's Works. With Notes, Critical and Explanatory, and a Biographical Memoir by WILLIAM GIFFORD. Edited by Colonel CUNNINGHAM. Three Vols.

Chapman's Works. Three Vols. Vol. I. contains the Plays complete; Vol. II., Poems and Minor Translations, with an Essay by A. C. SWINBURNE; Vol. III., Translations of the Iliad and Odyssey.

Marlowe's Works. Edited, with Notes, by Colonel CUNNINGHAM. One Vol.

Maseinger's Plays. From GIFFORD'S Text. Edited by Colonel CUNNINGHAM. One Vol.

Duncan (Sara Jeannette: Mrs. EVERARD COTES), Works by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d. each.

A Social Departure. With 111 Illustrations by F. H. TOWNSEND.

An American Girl in London. With 80 Illustrations by F. H. TOWNSEND.

The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib. With 37 Illustrations by F. H. TOWNSEND.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

A Daughter of To-Day. | **Vernon's Aunt.** With 47 Illustrations by HAL HURST.

Dyer (T. F. Thiselton).—The Folk-Lore of Plants. Cr. 8vo, cl., 6s.

Early English Poets. Edited, with Introductions and Annotations, by Rev. A. B. GROSART, D.D. Crown 8vo, cloth boards, 3s. 6d. per Volume.

Fleetoner's (Giles) Complete Poems. One Vol.

Davies' (Sir John) Complete Poetical Works. Two Vols.

Herrick's (Robert) Complete Collected Poems. Three Vols.

Sidney's (Sir Philip) Complete Poetical Works. Three Vols.

Edgcombe (Sir E. R. Pearce).—Zephyrus: A Holiday in Brazil and on the River Plate. With 41 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

Edison, The Life and Inventions of Thomas A. By W. K. L. and ANTONIA DICKSON. With 200 Illustrations by R. F. OUTCALT, &c. Demy 4to, cloth gilt, 28s.

Edwardes (Mrs. Annie), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
Archle Lovell. | **A Point of Honour.**

Edwardes (Eliezer).—Words, Facts, and Phrases: A Dictionary of Curious Quaint, and Out-of-the-Way Matters. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.**Edwards (M. Betham=), Novels by.**

Kitty. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.; cloth, 2s. 6d. | **Felicia.** Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Egerton (Rev. J. C., M.A.).—Sussex Folk and Sussex Ways. With Introduction by Rev. Dr. H. WACE, and Four Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.**Eggleston (Edward).—Roxy: A Novel.** Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s.**Englishman's House, The: A Practical Guide for Selecting or Building a House.** By C. J. RICHARDSON. Coloured Frontispiece and 534 Illusts. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.**Ewald (Alex. Charles, F.S.A.), Works by.**

The Life and Times of Prince Charles Stuart, Count of Albany (THE YOUNG PRETENDER). With a Portrait. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.
Stories from the State Papers. With Autotype Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Eyes, Our: How to Preserve Them. By JOHN BROWNING. Cr. 8vo, 1s.**Familiar Short Sayings of Great Men.** By SAMUEL ARTHUR BENT, A.M. Fifth Edition, Revised and Enlarged. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.**Faraday (Michael), Works by.** Post 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d. each.

The Chemical History of a Candle: Lectures delivered before a Juvenile Audience. Edited by WILLIAM CROOKES, F.C.S. With numerous Illustrations.
On the Various Forces of Nature, and their Relations to each other. Edited by WILLIAM CROOKES, F.C.S. With Illustrations.

Farrer (J. Anson), Works by.

Military Manners and Customs. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.
War: Three Essays, reprinted from 'Military Manners and Customs.' Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Fenn (G. Manville), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The New Mistress. | **Witness to the Deed.** | **The Tiger Lily.** | **The White Virgin.**

Fin-Bec.—The Cupboard Papers: Observations on the Art of Living and Dining. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.**Fireworks, The Complete Art of Making; or, The Pyrotechnist's Treasury,** By THOMAS KENTISH. With 267 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.**First Book, My.** By WALTER BESANT, JAMES PAYN, W. CLARK RUSSELL, GRANT ALLEN, HALL CAINE, GEORGE R. SIMS, RUDYARD KIPLING, A. CONAN DOYLE, M. E. BRADDON, F. W. ROBINSON, H. RIDER HAGGARD, R. M. BALLANTYNE, I. ZANGWILL, MORLEY ROBERTS, D. CHRISTIE MURRAY, MARY CORELLI, J. K. JEROME, JOHN STRANGE WINTER, BRET HARTE, 'O,' ROBERT BUCHANAN, and R. L. STEVENSON. With a Prefatory Story by JEROME K. JEROME, and 185 Illustrations. A New Edition, Small-demy 8vo, art linen, 3s. 6d.**Fitzgerald (Percy), Works by.**

Little Essays: Passages from the Letters of CHARLES LAMB. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.
Fatal Zero. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Pos 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Bella Donna. | **The Lady of Brantome.** | **The Second Mrs. Tillotson.**
Polly. | **Never Forgotten.** | **Seventy-five Brooke Street.**

The Life of James Boswell (of Auchinleck). With Illusts. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 24s.
The Savoy Opera. With 60 Illustrations and Portraits. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.
Sir Henry Irving: Twenty Years at the Lyceum. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Flammarion (Camille), Works by.

Popular Astronomy: A General Description of the Heavens. Translated by J. ELLARD GORE, F.R.A.S. With Three Plates and 283 Illustrations. Medium 8vo, cloth, 16s.
Urania: A Romance. With 87 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

Fletcher's (Giles, B.D.) Complete Poems: Christ's Victorie in Heaven, Christ's Victorie on Earth, Christ's Triumph over Death, and Minor Poems. With Notes by Rev. A. B. GROSART, D.D. Crown 8vo, cloth boards, 3s. 6d.**Fonblanque (Albany).—Filthy Lucre.** Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s.

Francillon (R. E.), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

One by One. | **A Real Queen.** | **A Dog and his Shadow.**
Ropes of Sand. Illustrated.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Queen Cophetua. | **Olympia.** | **Romanes of the Law.** | **King or Knave?**

Jack Doyle's Daughter. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.
Esther's Glove. Fcap. 8vo, picture cover, 1s.

Frederic (Harold), Novels by. Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s. each.

Seth's Brother's Wife. | **The Lawton Girl.**

French Literature, A History of. By HENRY VAN LAUN. Three Vols., demy 8vo, cloth boards, 7s. 6d. each.

Friswell (Hain).—One of Two: A Novel. Post 8vo, illust. bds., 2s.

Fry's (Herbert) Royal Guide to the London Charities. Edited by JOHN LANE. Published Annually. Crown 8vo, cloth, 1s. 6d.

Gardening Books. Post 8vo, 1s. each; cloth limp. 1s. 6d. each.

A Year's Work in Garden and Greenhouse. By GEORGE GLENNY.
Household Horticulture. By TOM and JANE JERROLD. Illustrated.
The Garden that Paid the Rent. By TOM JERROLD.

My Garden Wild. By FRANCIS G. HEATH. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Gardner (Mrs. Alan).—Rifle and Spear with the Rajpoots: Being the Narrative of a Winter's Travel and Sport in Northern India. With numerous Illustrations by the Author and F. H. TOWNSEND. Demy 4to, half-bound, 21s.

Garrett (Edward).—The Capel Girls: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with two Illustrations, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Gaulot (Paul).—The Red Shirts: A Story of the Revolution. Translated by JOHN DE VILLIERS. With a Frontispiece by STANLEY WOOD. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Gentleman's Magazine, The. 1s. Monthly. Contains Stories, Articles upon Literature, Science, Biography, and Art, and 'Table Talk' by SYLVANUS URBAN.
** * * Bound Volumes for recent years kept in stock, 8s. 6d. each. Cases for binding, 2s. each.*

Gentleman's Annual, The. Published Annually in November. 1s.

German Popular Stories. Collected by the Brothers GRIMM and Translated by EDGAR TAYLOR. With Introduction by JOHN RUSKIN, and 22 Steel Plates after GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. Square 8vo, cloth, 6s. 6d.; gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

Gibbon (Chas.), Novels by. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d. ea.; post 8vo, bds., 2s. ea.

Robin Gray. Frontispiece. | **The Golden Shaft.** Frontispiece. | **Loving a Dream.**

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each

The Flower of the Forest.
The Dead Heart.
For Lack of Gold.
What Will the World Say?
For the King. | **A Hard Knot.**
Queen of the Meadow.
In Pastures Green.

In Love and War.
A Heart's Problem.
By Head and Stream.
The Brass of Yarrow.
Fancy Free. | **Of High Degree.**
In Honour Bound.
Heart's Delight. | **Blood-Money.**

Gilbert (W. S.), Original Plays by. In Three Series, 2s. 6d. each.

The FIRST SERIES contains: The Wicked World—Pygmalion and Galatea—Charity—The Princess—The Palace of Truth—Trial by Jury.

The SECOND SERIES: Broken Hearts—Engaged—Sweethearts—Gretchen—Dan'l Druce—Tom Cobb—H.M.S. 'Pinafore'—The Sorcerer—The Pirates of Penzance.

The THIRD SERIES: Comedy and Tragedy—Foggerty's Fairy—Rosencrantz and Guildenstern—Patience—Princess Ida—The Mikado—Ruddigore—The Yeomen of the Guard—The Gondoliers—The Mountebanks—Utopia.

Eight Original Comic Operas written by W. S. GILBERT. In Two Series. Demy 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. each. The FIRST containing: The Sorcerer—H.M.S. 'Pinafore'—The Pirates of Penzance—Iolanthe—Patience—Princess Ida—The Mikado—Trial by Jury.

The SECOND SERIES containing: The Gondoliers—The Grand Duke—The Yeomen of the Guard—His Excellency—Utopia, Limited—Ruddigore—The Mountebanks—Haste to the Wedding.

The Gilbert and Sullivan Birthday Book: Quotations for Every Day in the Year, selected from Plays by W. S. GILBERT set to Music by Sir A. SULLIVAN. Compiled by ALEX. WATSON. Royal 16mo, Japanese leather, 2s. 6d.

Gilbert (William), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated bds., 2s. each.
 Dr. Austin's Guests. | James Duke, Costermonger.
 The Wizard of the Mountain.

Glanville (Ernest), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Lost Heiress: A Tale of Love, Battle, and Adventure. With Two Illustrations by H. NISBET
The Fossilker: A Romance of Mashonaland. With Two Illustrations by HUME NISBET.
A Fair Colonist. With a Frontispiece by STANLEY WOOD.

The Golden Rook: With a Frontispiece by STANLEY WOOD. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.
Kloof Yarns. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Glenny (George).—A Year's Work in Garden and Greenhouse:
 Practical Advice as to the Management of the Flower, Fruit, and Frame Garden. Post 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Godwin (William).—Lives of the Necromancers. Post 8vo, cl., 2s.

Golden Treasury of Thought, The: An Encyclopædia of QUOTATIONS. Edited by THEODORE TAYLOR. Crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 7s. 6d.

Goutaut, Memoirs of the Duchesse de (Gouvernante to the Children of France), 1773-1836. With Two Photographures. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth extra, 21s.

Goodman (E. J.).—The Fate of Herbert Wayne. Cr. 8vo, 3s. 6d.

Graham (Leonard).—The Professor's Wife: A Story. Fcp. 8vo, 1s.

Greeks and Romans, The Life of the, described from Antique Monuments. By ERNST GUHL and W. KONER. Edited by Dr. F. HUEFFER. With 545 Illustrations. Large crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Greville (Henry), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Nikanor. Translated by ELIZA E. CHASE.

A Noble Woman. Translated by ALBERT D. VANDAM.

Griffith (Cecil).—Corinthia Marazion: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Grundy (Sydney).—The Days of his Vanity: A Passage in the Life of a Young Man. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Habberton (John, Author of 'Helen's Babies'), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Brueton's Bayou.

Country Luck.

Hair, The: Its Treatment in Health, Weakness, and Disease. Translated from the German of Dr. J. PINCUS. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Hake (Dr. Thomas Gordon), Poems by. Cr. 8vo, cl. ex., 6s. each.
 New Symbols. | Legende of the Morrow. | The Serpent Play.

Malden Ecstasy. Small 4to, cloth extra, 8s.

Halifax (C.).—Dr. Rumsey's Patient. By Mrs. L. T. MEADE and CLIFFORD HALIFAX, M.D. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Hall (Mrs. S. C.).—Sketches of Irish Character. With numerous Illustrations on Steel and Wood by MACLISE, GILBERT, HARVEY, and GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. Small demy 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Hall (Owen).—The Track of a Storm. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Halliday (Andrew).—Every-day Papers. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Handwriting, The Philosophy of. With over 100 Facsimiles and Explanatory Text. By DON FELIX DE SALAMANCA. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Hanky-Panky: Easy and Difficult Tricks, White Magic, Sleight of Hand, &c. Edited by W. H. CREMER. With 200 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d.

Hardy (Lady Duffus).—Paul Wynter's Sacrifice. Post 8vo, bds., 2s.

Hardy (Thomas).—Under the Greenwood Tree. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Portrait and 15 Illustrations, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Harwood (J. Berwick).—The Tenth Earl. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Harte's (Bret) Collected Works. Revised by the Author. LIBRARY

EDITION, in Nine Volumes, crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. each.

- Vol. I. COMPLETE POETICAL AND DRAMATIC WORKS. With Steel-plate Portrait.
 " II. THE LUCK OF ROARING CAMP—BOHEMIAN PAPERS—AMERICAN LEGENDS.
 " III. TALES OF THE ARGONAUTS—EASTERN SKETCHES.
 " IV. GABRIEL CONROY. | Vol. V. STORIES—CONDENSED NOVELS, &c.
 " VI. TALES OF THE PACIFIC SLOPE.
 " VII. TALES OF THE PACIFIC SLOPE—II. With Portrait by JOHN PETTIE, R.A.
 " VIII. TALES OF THE PINE AND THE CYPRESS.
 " IX. BUCKEYE AND CHAPPAREL.

The Select Works of Bret Harte, in Prose and Poetry. With Introductory Essay by J. M. BELLEW, Portrait of the Author, and 50 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Bret Harte's Poetical Works. Printed on hand-made paper. Crown 8vo, buckram, 4s. 6d.

A New Volume of Poems. Crown 8vo, buckram, 5s.

The Queen of the Pirate Isle. With 28 Original Drawings by KATE GREENAWAY, reproduced in Colours by EDMUND EVANS. Small 4to, cloth, 5s.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s. each.

A Wolf of the Plains. With 60 Illustrations by STANLEY L. WOOD.

A Ward of the Golden Gate. With 59 Illustrations by STANLEY L. WOOD.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

A Sappho of Green Springs, &c. With Two Illustrations by HUME NISBET.

Colonel Starbottle's Client, and Some Other People. With a Frontispiece.

Suey: A Novel. With Frontispiece and Vignette by J. A. CHRISTIE.

Sally Dowe, &c. With 47 Illustrations by W. D. ALMOND and others.

A Protegee of Jack Hamlin's, &c. With 26 Illustrations by W. SMALL and others.

The Bell-Ringer of Angels, &c. With 39 Illustrations by DUDLEY HARDY and others.

Clarence: A Story of the American War. With Eight Illustrations by A. JULE GOODMAN.

Berker's Luck, &c. With 39 Illustrations by A. FORBSTER, PAUL HARDY, &c.

Devil's Ford, &c. With a Frontispiece by W. H. OVEREND.

The Crusade of the "Excelesior." With a Frontispiece by J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE.

Three Partners; or, The Strike on Heavy Tree Hill. With 8 Illustrations by J. GULICH, [Apr. 8.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Gabriel Conroy.

An Heiress of Red Dog, &c.

The Luck of Roaring Camp, &c. Californian Stories.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth, 2s. 6d. each.

Filip.

Maruja.

A Phyllis of the Sierras.

Haweis (Mrs. H. R.), Books by.

The Art of Beauty. With Coloured Frontispiece and 91 Illustrations. Square 8vo, cloth bds., 6s.

The Art of Decoration. With Coloured Frontispiece and 74 Illustrations. Sq. 8vo, cloth bds., 6s.

The Art of Dress. With 32 Illustrations. Post 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Chaucer for Schools. Demy 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Chaucer for Children. With 38 Illustrations (8 Coloured). Crown 4to, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Hawels (Rev. H. R., M.A.), Books by.

American Memorials: WASHINGTON IRVING, OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, ARTEMUS WARD, MARK TWAIN, and BRET HARTE. Third Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Travel and Talk, 1885-93-95: My Hundred Thousand Miles of Travel through America—Canada—New Zealand—Tasmania—Australia—Ceylon—The Paradieses of the Pacific. With Photogravure Frontispieces. A New Edition. Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth, 12s.

Hawthorne (Julian), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Garth. | **Elliole Quentin.**

Beatrix Randolph. With Four Illusts.

Sebastian Strom.

David Poindexter's Disappearance.

Fortune's Fool. | **Dust.** Four Illusts.

The Spectra of the Camera.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Miss Cadogna.

Love—or a Name.

Mrs. Gainsborough's Diamonds. Fcap. 8vo, illustrated cover, 1s.

Hawthorne (Nathaniel).—Our Old Home. Annotated with Passages from the Author's Note-books, and Illustrated with 32 Photogravures. Two Vols., cr. 8vo, 15s.

Heath (Francis George).—My Garden Wild, and What I Grew There. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt edges, 6s.

Helps (Sir Arthur), Works by. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.
Animals and their Masters. | **Social Pressure.**

Ivan de Elron: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Henderson (Isaac).—Agatha Page: A Novel. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d.

Henty (G. A.), Novels by.

Rujub the Juggler. With Eight Illustrations by STANLEY L. WOOD. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Dorothy's Double. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

The Queen's Cup. 3 vols., crown 8vo, 15s. net.

Herman (Henry).—A Leading Lady. Post 8vo, bds., 2s.; cl., 2s. 6d.

Herrick's (Robert) Hesperides, Noble Numbers, and Complete Collected Poems. With Memorial-Introduction and Notes by the Rev. A. B. GROSART, D.D., Steel Portrait, &c. Three Vols., crown 8vo, cloth boards, 3s. 6d. each.

Hertzka (Dr. Theodor).—**Freeland: A Social Anticipation.** Translated by ARTHUR RANSOM. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Hesse-Wartegg (Chevalier Ernst von).—**Tunis: The Land and the People.** With 22 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Hill (Headon).—**Zambra the Detective.** Post 8vo, bds., 2s.; cl., 2s. 6d.

Hill (John), Works by.

Treason-Felony. Post 8vo, boards, 2s. | **The Common Ancestor.** Cr. 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Hoey (Mrs. Cashel).—**The Lover's Creed.** Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Holiday, Where to go for a. By E. P. SHOLL, Sir H. MAXWELL, Bart., M.P., JOHN WATSON, JANE BARLOW, MARY LOVETT CAMERON, JUSTIN H. MCCARTHY, PAUL LANGE, J. W. GRAHAM, J. H. SALTER, PHEBBE ALLEN, S. J. BECKETT, L. RIVERS VINE, and C. F. GORDON CUMMING. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Hollingshead (John).—**Niagara Spray.** Crown 8vo, 1s.

Holmes (Gordon, M.D.).—**The Science of Voice Production and Voice Preservation.** Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Holmes (Oliver Wendell), Works by.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table. Illustrated by J. GORDON THOMSON. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.—Another Edition, post 8vo, cloth, 2s.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table and The Professor at the Breakfast-Table. In One Vol. Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.

Hood's (Thomas) Choice Works in Prose and Verse. With Life of the Author, Portrait, and 200 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.
Hood's Whims and Oddities. With 85 Illustrations. Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.

Hood (Tom).—**From Nowhere to the North Pole: A Noah's Arkæological Narrative.** With 25 Illustrations by W. BRUNTON and E. C. BARNES. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Hook's (Theodore) Choice Humorous Works; including his Ludicrous Adventures, Bons Mots, Puns, and Hoaxes. With Life of the Author, Portraits, Facsimiles, and Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Hooper (Mrs. Geo.).—**The House of Raby.** Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Hopkins (Tighe).—**'Twixt Love and Duty.'** Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Horne (R. Hengist).—**Orion: An Epic Poem.** With Photograph Portrait by SUMMERS. Tenth Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s.

Hungerford (Mrs., Author of 'Molly Bawn'), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

A Maiden All Forlorn.	A Modern Circa.	An Unsatisfactory Lover.
Marvel.	A Mental Struggle.	Lady Patty.
In Durance Yile.	The Three Graces.	

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Lady Verner's Flight. | **The Red-House Mystery.**

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

The Professor's Experiment. With Frontispiece by E. J. WHEELER.

Nora Creina. | **April's Lady.**

An Anxious Moment, &c.

A Point of Conscience. [Shortly.]

Lothoe. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s. [Shortly.]

Hunt's (Leigh) Essays: A Tale for a Chimney Corner, &c. Edited by EDMUNO OLLIER. Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.

Hunt (Mrs. Alfred), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Lead Casket. | **Self-Condemned.** | **That Other Person.**

Thornicroft's Model. Post 8vo, boards, 2s. | **Mrs. Juliet.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Hutchison (W. M.).—**Hints on Colt-breaking.** With 25 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Hydrophobia: An Account of M. PASTEUR'S System; The Technique of his Method, and Statistics. By RENAUD SUZOR, M.B. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Hyne (C. J. Cutcliffe).—**Honour of Thieves.** Cr. 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Idler (The): An Illustrated Monthly Magazine. Edited by J. K. JEROME. Nos. 1 to 48, 6d. each; No. 49 and following Numbers, 1s. each. The first EIGHT VOLS., cloth, 5s. each Vol. IX. and after, 7s. 6d. each.—Cases for Binding, 1s. 6d. each.

Impressions (The) of Aureole. Cheaper Edition, with a New Preface. Post 8vo, blush-rose paper and cloth, 2s. 6d.

Indoor Paupers. By ONE OF THEM. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Ingelow (Jean).—Fated to be Free. Post 8vo, illustrated bds., 2s.

Innkeeper's Handbook (The) and Licensed Victualler's Manual.
By J. TREVOR-DAVIES. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Irish Wit and Humour, Songs of. Collected and Edited by A. PERCEVAL GRAVES. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Irving (Sir Henry): A Record of over Twenty Years at the Lyceum.
By PERCY FITZGERALD. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

James (C. T. C.).—A Romance of the Queen's Hounds. Post 8vo, picture cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

Jameson (William).—My Dead Self. Post 8vo, bds., 2s.; cl., 2s. 6d.

Japp (Alex. H., LL.D.).—Dramatic Pictures, &c. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Jay (Harriett), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
The Dark Colleen. | *The Queen of Connaught.*

Jefferies (Richard), Works by. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.
Nature near London. | *The Life of the Fields.* | *The Open Air.*
* * Also the HAND-MADE PAPER EDITION, crown 8vo, buckram, gilt top, 6s. each.

The Enlogy of Richard Jefferies. By Sir WALTER BESANT. With a Photograph Portrait. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Jennings (Henry J.), Works by.
Curiosities of Criticism. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.
Lord Tennyson: A Biographical Sketch. With Portrait. Post 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Jerome (Jerome K.), Books by.
Stageland. With 64 Illustrations by J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE. Fcap. 4to, picture cover, 1s.
John Ingerfield, &c. With 9 Illusts. by A. S. BOYD and JOHN GULICH. Fcap. 8vo, pic. cov. 1s. 6d.
The Prude's Progress: A Comedy by J. K. JEROME and EDEN PHILLIPOTS. Cr. 8vo, 1s. 6d.

Jerrold (Douglas).—The Barber's Chair; and The Hedgehog Letters. Post 8vo, printed on laid paper and half-bound, 2s.

Jerrold (Tom), Works by. Post 8vo, 1s. ea.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d. each.
The Garden that Paid the Rent.
Household Horticulture: A Gossip about Flowers. Illustrated.

Jesse (Edward).—Scenes and Occupations of a Country Life. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Jones (William, F.S.A.), Works by. Cr. 8vo, cl. extra, 7s. 6d. each.
Finger-Ring Lore: Historical, Legendary, and Anecdotal. With nearly 300 Illustrations. Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged.
Credulities, Past and Present. Including the Sea and Seamen, Miners, Talismans, Word and Letter Divination, Exorcising and Blessing of Animals, Birds, Eggs, Luck, &c. With Frontispiece.
Crowns and Coronations: A History of Regalia. With 100 Illustrations.

Jonson's (Ben) Works. With Notes Critical and Explanatory, and a Biographical Memoir by WILLIAM GIFFORD. Edited by Colonel CUNNINGHAM. Three Vols. crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

Josephus, The Complete Works of. Translated by WRISTON. Containing 'The Antiquities of the Jews' and 'The Wars of the Jews.' With 52 Illustrations and Maps. Two Vols., demy 8vo, half-bound, 22s. 6d.

Kempt (Robert).—Pencil and Palette: Chapters on Art and Artists. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Kershaw (Mark).—Colonial Facts and Fictions: Humorous Sketches. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

King (R. Ashe), Novels by. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d. ea.; post 8vo, bds., 2s. ea.
A Drawn Game. | *'The Wearing of the Green.'*

Passion's Slave. | *Bell Barry.*
Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Knight (William, M.R.C.S., and Edward, L.R.C.P.).—**The Patient's Yade Moom:** How to Get Most Benefit from Medical Advice. Cr. 8vo, 1s.; cl., 1s. 6d.

Knights (The) of the Lion: A Romance of the Thirteenth Century. Edited, with an Introduction, by the MARQUESS OF LORNE, K.T. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Lamb's (Charles) Complete Works in Prose and Verse, including 'Poetry for Children' and 'Prince Dorus.' Edited, with Notes and Introduction, by R. H. SHEPHERD. With Two Portraits and Facsimile of the 'Essay on Roast Pig.' Crown 8vo, half-bd., 7s. 6d.
The Essays of Ella. Post 8vo, printed on laid paper and half-bound, 2s.
Little Essays: Sketches and Characters by CHARLES LAMB, selected from his Letters by PERCY FITZGERALD. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.
The Dramatic Essays of Charles Lamb. With Introduction and Notes by BRANDER MATTHEWS, and Steel-plate Portrait. Fcap. 8vo, half-bound, 2s. 6d.

Landor (Walter Savage).—**Citation and Examination of William** Shakspeare, &c., before Sir Thomas Lucy, touching Deer-stealing, 17th September, 1582. To which is added, **A Conference of Master Edmund Spenser** with the Earl of Essex, touching the State of Ireland, 1595. Fcap. 8vo, half-Roxburghe, 2s. 6d.

Lane (Edward William).—**The Thousand and One Nights,** commonly called in England **The Arabian Nights' Entertainments.** Translated from the Arabic, with Notes. Illustrated with many hundred Engravings from Designs by HARVEY. Edited by EDWARD STANLEY POOLE. With Preface by STANLEY LANG-POOLE. Three Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d. ea.

Larwood (Jacob), Works by.

Anecdotes of the Clergy. Post 8vo, laid paper, half-bound, 2s.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Forensic Anecdotes.

Theatrical Anecdotes.

Lehmann (R. C.), Works by. Post 8vo, 1s. each; cloth, 1s. 6d. each.
Harry Fludyar at Cambridge.
Conversational Hints for Young Shooters: A Guide to Polite Talk.

Leigh (Henry S.).—**Carols of Cockayne.** Printed on hand-made paper, bound in buckram, 5s.

Leland (C. Godfrey).—**A Manual of Mending and Repairing.** With Diagrams. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Lepelletier (Edmond).—**Madame Sans-Gêne.** Translated from the French by JOHN DE VILLIERS. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.

Leys (John).—**The Lindsays:** A Romance. Post 8vo, illust. bds., 2s.

Lindsay (Harry).—**Rhoda Roberts:** A Welsh Mining Story. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Linton (E. Lynn), Works by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Patrola Kemhall. | **Ione.** | **Under which Lord?** With 12 Illustrations.
The Atonement of Leam Dundae. | **'My Love!'** | **Sowing the Wind.**
The World Well Lost. With 12 Illusts. | **Pacton Carew,** Millionaire and Miser.

The One Too Many.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Rebel of the Family.

With a Silken Thread.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Witch Stories.

Ourselves: Essays on Women.

Freshooting: Extracts from the Works of Mrs. LYNN LINTON.

Dulole Everton. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

[*Shortly.*]

Lucy (Henry W.).—**Gideon Fleyce:** A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Malcalpine (Avery), Novels by.

Teresa Itasca. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 1s.

Broken Wings. With Six Illustrations by W. J. HENNESSY. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

MacColl (Hugh), Novels by.

Mr. Stranger's Sealed Packet. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Ednor Whitlock. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Macdonell (Agnes).—**Quaker Cousins.** Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

MacGregor (Robert).—**Pastimes and Players:** Notes on Popular Games. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Mackay (Charles, LL.D.).—**Interludes and Undertones;** or, Music at Twilight. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

McCarthy (Justin, M.P.), Works by.

A History of Our Own Times, from the Accession of Queen Victoria to the General Election of 1880. Four Vols., demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. each.—Also a POPULAR EDITION, in Four Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. each.—And the JUBILEE EDITION, with an Appendix of Events to the end of 1886, in Two Vols., large crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d. each.

* * Vol. V., bringing the narrative down to the end of the Sixtieth Year of the Queen's Reign, is in preparation. Demy 8vo, cloth, 12s.

A Short History of Our Own Times. One Vol., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.—Also a CHEAP POPULAR EDITION, post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

A History of the Four Georges. Four Vols., demy 8vo, cl. ex., 12s. each. [Vols. I. & II. ready.] Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

The Waterdale Neighbours.

My Enemy's Daughter.

A Fair Saxon.

Linley Rochford.

Dear Lady Diedald.

Miss Misanthrope. With 12 Illustrations.

Donna Quixote. With 12 Illustrations.

The Comet of a Season.

Maid of Athens. With 12 Illustrations.

Camilla: A Girl with a Fortune.

The Dictator.

Red Diamonds.

The Riddle Ring. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

[May, 1897.]

'The Right Honourable.' By JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P., and Mrs. CAMPELL PRAED. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

McCarthy (Justin Huntly), Works by.

The French Revolution. (Constituent Assembly, 1789-91). Four Vols., demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. each. Vols. I. & II. ready; Vols. III. & IV. in the press.

An Outline of the History of Ireland. Crown 8vo, 1s. cloth, 3s. 6d.

Ireland Since the Union: Sketches of Irish History, 1798-1886. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Hazlitt in London: Poems. Small 8vo, gold cloth, 3s. 6d.

Our Sensation Novel. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

Doom: An Atlantic Episode. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.

Dolly: A Sketch. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

Lily Lass: A Romance. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

The Thousand and One Days. With Two Photographures. Two Vols., crown 8vo, half-bd., 12s.

A London Legend. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

The Royal Christopher. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

MacDonald (George, LL.D.), Books by.

Works of Fancy and Imagination. Ten Vols., 16mo, cloth, gilt edges, in cloth case, 22s.; or the Volumes may be had separately, in Groller cloth, at 2s. 6d. each.

Vol. I. WITHIN AND WITHOUT.—THE HIDDEN LIFE.

" II. THE DISCIPLE.—THE GOSPEL WOMEN.—BOOK OF SONNETS.—ORGAN SONGS.

" III. VIOLIN SONGS.—SONGS OF THE DAYS AND NIGHTS.—A BOOK OF DREAMS.—ROADSIDE POEMS.—POEMS FOR CHILDREN.

" IV. PARABLES.—BALLADS.—SCOTCH SONGS.

" V. & VI. PHANTASTES: A Faerie Romance. | Vol. VII. THE PORTENT.

" VIII. THE LIGHT PRINCESS.—THE GIANT'S HEART.—SHADOWS.

" IX. CROSS PURPOSES.—THE GOLDEN KEY.—THE CARASOYN.—LITTLE DAYLIGHT.

" X. THE CRUEL PAINTER.—THE WOV O' RIVVEN.—THE CASTLE.—THE BROKEN SWORDS.—THE GRAY WOLF.—UNCLE CORNELIUS.

Poetical Works of George MacDonald. Collected and Arranged by the Author. Two Vols., crown 8vo, buckram, 12s.

A Threefold Cord. Edited by GEORGE MACDONALD. Post 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Phantastes: A Faerie Romance. With 25 Illustrations by J. BELL. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Heather and Snow: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Lilith: A Romance. SECOND EDITION. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Maclise Portrait Gallery (The) of Illustrious Literary Characters: 85 Portraits by DANIEL MACLISE; with Memoirs—Biographical, Critical, Bibliographical and Anecdotal—illustrative of the Literature of the former half of the Present Century, by WILLIAM BATES, B.A. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.**Macquoid (Mrs.), Works by. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. each.**

In the Ardennes. With 50 Illustrations by THOMAS R. MACQUOID.

Plotree and Legends from Normandy and Brittany. 34 Illusts. by T. R. MACQUOID.

Through Normandy. With 92 Illustrations by T. R. MACQUOID, and a Map.

Through Brittany. With 35 Illustrations by T. R. MACQUOID, and a Map.

About Yorkshire. With 67 Illustrations by T. R. MACQUOID.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Evil Eye, and other Stories.

Loet Rose, and other Stories.

Magician's Own Book, The: Performances with Eggs, Hats, &c.

Edited by W. H. CREMER. With 200 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d.

Magic Lantern, The, and its Management: Including full Practical

Directions. By T. C. HEPWORTH. With 10 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Magna Charta: An Exact Facsimile of the Original in the British

Museum, 3 feet by 2 feet, with Arms and Seals emblazoned in Gold and Colours, 5s.

Mallory (Sir Thomas). — Mort d'Arthur: The Stories of King

Arthur and of the Knights of the Round Table. (A Selection.) Edited by B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Mallock (W. H.), Works by.

- The New Republic.** Post 8vo, picture cover, 2s.; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.
The New Paul & Virginia: Positivism on an Island. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.
A Romance of the Nineteenth Century. Crown 8vo, cloth 6s.; post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s.
Poems. Small 4to, parchment, 8s.
Is Life Worth Living? Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Marks (H. S., R.A.), Pen and Pencil Sketches by. With Four Photographures and 126 Illustrations. Two Vols. demy 8vo, cloth, 32s.**Marlowe's Works.** Including his Translations. Edited, with Notes and Introductions, by Colonel CUNNINGHAM. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.**Marryat (Florence), Novels by.** Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s. each.

- A Harvest of Wild Oats.** | **Fighting the Air.**
Open! Sesame! | **Written in Fire.**

Massinger's Plays. From the Text of WILLIAM GIFFORD. Edited by Col. CUNNINGHAM. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.**Masterman (J.).—Half-a-Dozen Daughters.** Post 8vo, boards, 2s.**Matthews (Brander).—A Secret of the Sea, &c.** Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.**Meade (L. T.), Novels by.**

- A Soldier of Fortune.** Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

- In an Iron Grip.** |

The Voice of the Charmer. With 8 Illustrations.

- Dr. Rumsey's Patient.** By L. T. MEADE and CLIFFORD HALIFAX, M.D. Crown 8vo, cl. 6s.

Merrick (Leonard), Stories by.

- The Man who was Good.** Post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.
This Stage of Fools. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.
Cynthia: A Daughter of the Philistines. 2 vols., crown 8vo, 10s. net.

Mexican Mustang (On a), through Texas to the Rio Grande. By A. E. SWERT and J. ARMOY KNOX With 265 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.**Middlemass (Jean), Novels by.** Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s. each.

- Touch and Go.** | **Mr. Dorillon.**

Miller (Mrs. F. Fenwick).—Physiology for the Young; or, The House of Life. With numerous Illustrations. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.**Milton (J. L.), Works by.** Post 8vo, 1s. each; cloth, 1s. 6d. each.

- The Hygiene of the Skin.** With Directions for Diet, Soaps, Baths, Wines, &c.
The Bath in Disease of the Skin.
The Laws of Life, and their Relation to Diseases of the Skin.

Minto (Wm.).—Was She Good or Bad? Cr. 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.**Mitford (Bertram), Novels by.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

- The Gun-Runner: A Romance of Zululand.** With a Frontispiece by STANLEY L. WOOD.
The Luok of Gerard Ridgeley. With a Frontispiece by STANLEY L. WOOD.
The King's Assagai. With Six full-page Illustrations by STANLEY L. WOOD.
Renshaw Fanning's Quest. With a Frontispiece by STANLEY L. WOOD.

Molesworth (Mrs.), Novels by.

- Hathercourt Rectory.** Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.
That Girl in Black. Crown 8vo, cloth, 1s. 6d.

Moncreiff (W. D. Scott).—The Abdication: An Historical Drama.

- With Seven Etchings by JOHN PETTIE, W. Q. ORCHARDSON, J. MACWHIRTER, COLIN HUNTER, R. MACBETH and TOM GRAHAM. Imperial 4to, buckram, 21s.

Moore (Thomas), Works by.

- The Epoureaun; and Alephron.** Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.
Prose and Verse; including Suppressed Passages from the MEMOIRS OF LORD BYRON. Edited by R. H. SHEPHERD. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Muddock (J. E.) Stories by.

- Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.
Maid Marian and Robin Hood. With 12 Illustrations by STANLEY WOOD.
Battle the Jester. With Frontispiece by STANLEY WOOD.
Young Lechinvar. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
The Dead Man's Secret. | **From the Bosom of the Deep.**
Stories Weird and Wonderful Post 8vo illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

Murray (D. Christie), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

A Life's Atonement.	A Model Father.	Bob Martin's Little Girl.
Joseph's Coat. 12 Illusts.	Old Blazer's Hero.	Time's Revenges.
Coals of Fire. 3 Illusts.	Cynio Fortune. Frontisp.	A Wasted Crime.
Yal Strange.	By the Gate of the Sea.	In Direst Peril.
Hearts.	A Bit of Human Nature.	Mount Despair.
The Way of the World.	First Person Singular.	

A Capful o' Nails. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.
The Making of a Novelist: An Experiment in Autobiography. With a Collotype Portrait and Vignette. Crown 8vo, art linen, 6s.

Murray (D. Christie) and Henry Herman, Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

One Traveller Returns.	The Bishops' Bible.
Paul Jones's Alias, &c. With Illustrations by A. FORESTIER and G. NICOLET.	

Murray (Henry), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth, 2s. 6d. each.

A Game of Bluff.	A Song of Sixpence.
-------------------------	----------------------------

Newbolt (Henry).—Taken from the Enemy. Fcp. 8vo, cloth, 1s. 6d.**Nisbet (Hume), Books by:**

'Bail Up.' Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.
Dr. Bernard St. Vincent. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.
Lessons in Art. With 22 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 2s. 6d.
Where Art Begins. With 27 Illustrations. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Norris (W. E.), Novels by.

Saint Ann's. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.
Billy Bellow. With a Frontispiece by F. H. TOWNSEND. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

O'Hanlon (Alice), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Unforeseen.	Chance? or Fate?
------------------------	-------------------------

Ohnet (Georges), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Doctor Rameau.	A Last Love.
A Weird Gift. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.	

Oliphant (Mrs.), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Primrose Path.	Whiteladies.
The Greatest Heiress in England.	
The Sorceress. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.	

O'Reilly (Mrs.).—Phebe's Fortunes. Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s.**Ouida, Novels by.** Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d. ea.; post 8vo, illust. bds., 2s. ea.

Held in Bondage.	Folle-Farine.	Mothe.	Pipistrello.
Tricotrin.	A Dog of Flanders.	In Maremma.	Wanda.
Strathmore.	Escarcel.	Bimbi.	Syrin.
Cbandos.	Two Wooden Shoes.	Francesca.	Othmar.
Cecil Castlemaine's Gage	In a Winter City.	Princess Napraxine.	Gulderoy.
Under Two Flags.	Ariadne.	Friendship.	Ruffino.
Puok.	Idalla.	A Village Commune.	Two Offenders.

Square 8vo, cloth extra, 5s. each.

Bimbi. With Nine Illustrations by EDMUND H. GARRETT.
A Dog of Flanders, &c. With Six Illustrations by EDMUND H. GARRETT.

Santa Barbara, &c. Square 8vo, cloth, 6s.; crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.
 POPULAR EDITIONS. Medium 8vo, 6s. each; cloth, 1s. each.

Under Two Flags.	Mothe.
-------------------------	---------------

Wisdom, Wit, and Pathos, selected from the Works of OUIDA by F. SYDNEY MORRIS. Post 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.—CHEAP EDITION, illustrated boards, 2s.

Page (H. A.).—Thoreau: His Life and Aims. With Portrait. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.**Pandurang Hari; or, Memoirs of a Hindoo.** With Preface by Sir BARTLE FRERE. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.**Parker (Rev. Joseph, D.D.).—Might Have Been: some Life Notes.** Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.**Pascal's Provincial Letters.** A New Translation, with Historical Introduction and Notes by T. M'CRIB, D.D. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.**Paul (Margaret A.).—Gentle and Simple.** Crown 8vo, cloth, with Frontispiece by HELEN PATERSON, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Payn (James), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Lost Sir Messingberd.
Walter's Word.
Less Black than We're Painted.
By Proxy. | **For Cash Only.**
High Spirits.
Under One Roof.
A Confidential Agent. With 12 Illusts.
A Grapes from a Thorn. With 12 Illusts.

Holiday Task.
The Canon's Ward. With Portrait.
The Talk of the Town. With 12 Illusts.
Glow-Worm Tales.
The Mystery of Mirbridge.
The Word and the Will.
The Burnt Million.
Sunny Stories. | **A Trying Patient**

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Humorous Stories. | **From Exile.**
The Foster Brothers.
The Family Scapegrace.
Married Beneath Him.
Bentinck's Tutor. | **A County Family.**
A Perfect Treasure.
Like Father, Like Son.
A Woman's Vengeance.
Carlyon's Year. | **Cacl's Trust.**
Murphy's Master. | **At Her Mercy.**
In Peril and Privation. With 17 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.
Notes from the 'News.' Crown 8vo, portrait cover, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

The Cliffside of Clyffa.
Found Dead. | **Gwandoline's Harvest.**
Mirk Abbey. | **A Marina Residence.**
Soma Private Viawe.
Not Wood, But Won.
Two Hundred Pounds Reward.
The Best of Husbands.
Halves. | **What He Cost Her.**
Falico Fortunas. | **Kit: A Mamory.**
A Prince of the Blood.

Payne (Will).—Jerry the Dreamer. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Pennell (H. Cholmondeley), Works by. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. ea.

Puck on Pegasus. With illustrations.
Pegasus Re-Saddled. With Ten full-page Illustrations by G. DU MAURIER.
The Muses of Mayfair: Vers de Société. Selected by H. C. PENNELL.

PHELPS (E. Stuart), Works by. Post 8vo, 1s. ea.; cloth, 1s. 6d. ea.

Beyond the Gates. | **An Old Maid's Paradise.** | **Burglars in Paradise.**
Jack the Fisherman. Illustrated by C. W. REED. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Phil May's Sketch-Book. Containing 54 Humorous Cartoons. A New Edition. Crown folio, cloth, 2s. 6d.

Phipson (Dr. T. L.).—Famous Violinists and Fine Violins:

Historical Notes, Anecdotes, and Reminiscences. Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.

Pirkis (C. L.), Novels by.

Trooping with Crowe. Fcap. 8vo, picture cover, 1s.
Lady Lovelace. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Planche (J. R.), Works by.

The Pursuivant of Arms. With Six Plates and 209 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.
Songs and Poems, 1819-1879. With Introduction by Mrs. MACKARNESS. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men. With Notes and a Life of

Plutarch by JOHN and WM. LANGHORNE, and Portraits. Two Vols., demy 8vo, half-bound 10s. 6d.

Poe's (Edgar Allan) Choice Works in Prose and Poetry. With Intro-

duction by CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, Portrait and Facsimiles. Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.
The Mystery of Marie Rogat, &c. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Pollock (W. H.).—The Charm, and other Drawing-room Plays. By

Sir WALTER BESANT and WALTER H. POLLOCK. With 50 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 6s.

Pope's Poetical Works. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Porter (John).—Kingsclere. Edited by BYRON WEBBER. With 19 full-page and many smaller Illustrations. Second Edition. Demy 8vo, cloth decorated, 18s.

Praed (Mrs. Campbell), Novels by. Post 8vo, illust. bds., 2s. each.

The Romance of a Station. | **The Soul of Countess Adrian.**

Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, boards, 2s. each.

Outlaw and Lawmaker.

| **Christina Chard.** With Frontispiece by W. PAGET.

Mrs. Tragaekies. With 8 Illustrations by ROBERT SAUBER. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Price (E. C.), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Valentina. | **The Foreigners.** | **Mrs. Lancaster's Rival.**

Oaraid. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Princess Olga.—Radna: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Proctor (Richard A., B.A.), Works by.

Flowers of the Sky With 55 Illustrations. Small crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.
Easy Star Lessons. With Star Maps for every Night in the Year. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.
Familiar Solanoes Studies. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.
Saturn and its System. With 13 Steel Plates. Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 10s. 6d.
Mysterias of Time and Space. With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.
The Uolverna of Suna, &c. With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.
Wages and Wants of Science Workers. Crown 8vo, 1s. 6d.

Pryce (Richard).—Miss Maxwell's Affections. Crown 8vo, cloth, with Frontispiece by HAL LUDLOW, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Rambosson (J.).—Popular Astronomy. Translated by C. B. PITMAN. With Coloured Frontispiece and numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Randolph (Lieut.-Col. George, U.S.A.).—Aunt Abigail Dykes: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Read (General Meredith).—Historic Studies in Vaud, Berne, and Savoy. With 30 full-page Illustrations. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 28s. [Shortly.]

Reade's (Charles) Novels.

The New Collected LIBRARY EDITION, complete in Seventeen Volumes, set in new long primer type, printed on laid paper, and elegantly bound in cloth, price 3s. 6d. each.

1. Peg Woffington; and Christie Johnstone.
2. Hard Cash.
3. The Cloister and the Hearth. With a Preface by Sir WALTER BESANT.
4. 'It is Never too Late to Mend.'
5. The Course of True Love Never Did Run Smooth; and Singleheart and Doubleface.
6. The Autobiography of a Thief; Jack of all Trades; A Hero and a Martyr; and The Wandering Hair.

7. Love Me Little, Love Me Long.
8. The Double Marriage.
9. Griffith Gaunt.
10. Foul Play.
11. Put Yourself in His Place.
12. A Terrible Temptation.
13. A Simpleton.
14. A Woman-Hater.
15. The Jilt, and other Stories; and Good Stories of Man and other Animals.
16. A Perilous Secret.
17. Readiana; and Bible Characters.

In Twenty-one Volumes, post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Peg Woffington; | Christie Johnstone.
'It is Never too Late to Mend.'
The Course of True Love Never Did Run Smooth.
The Autobiography of a Thief; Jack of all Trades; and James Lambert.
Love Me Little, Love Me Long.
The Double Marriage.
The Cloister and the Hearth.

Hard Cash | Griffith Gaunt.
Foul Play | Put Yourself in His Place.
A Terrible Temptation.
A Simpleton. | The Wandering Hair
A Woman-Hater.
Singleheart and Doubleface.
Good Stories of Man and other Animals.
The Jilt, and other Stories.
A Perilous Secret. | Readiana.

POPULAR EDITIONS, medium 8vo, 6d. each: cloth, 1s. each.

'It is Never too Late to Mend.' | The Cloister and the Hearth.
Peg Woffington; and Christie Johnstone.

'It is Never too Late to Mend' and The Cloister and the Hearth in One Volume, medium 8vo, cloth, 2s.

Christie Johnstone. With Frontispiece. Chisely printed in Elzevir style. Fcap. 8vo, half-Roxb. 2s. 6d.

Peg Woffington. Chisely printed in Elzevir style. Fcap. 8vo, half-Roxb. 2s. 6d.

The Cloister and the Hearth. In Four Vols., post 8vo, with an Introduction by Sir WALTER BESANT, and a Frontispiece to each Vol., 14s. the set; and the ILLUSTRATED LIBRARY EDITION, with Illustrations on every page, Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth gilt, 42s. net.

Bible Characters. Fcap. 8vo, leatherette, 1s.

Selections from the Works of Charles Reade. With an Introduction by Mrs. ALEX. IRELAND. Crown 8vo, buckram, with Portrait, 6s.; CHEAP EDITION, post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Riddell (Mrs. J. H.), Novels by.

Wild Stories. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Uninhabited House.
The Prince of Wales's Garden Party.
The Mystery in Palace Gardens.

Fairy Water.
Her Mother's Darling.
The Nun's Curse. | Idle Tales.

Rimmer (Alfred), Works by. Square 8vo, cloth gilt, 7s. 6d. each.

Our Old Country Towns. With 55 Illustrations by the Author.

Ramble Round Eton and Harrow. With 50 Illustrations by the Author.

About England with Dickens. With 58 Illustrations by C. A. VANDERHOOF and A. RIMMER.

Rives (Amelle).—Barbara Dering. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Robinson Crusoe. By DANIEL DEFOE. With 37 Illustrations by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. Post 8vo, half-cloth, 2s.; cloth extra, gilt edges, 2s. 6d.

Robinson (F. W.), Novels by.

Women are Strange. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

The Hands of Justice. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

The Woman in the Dark. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Robinson (Phil), Works by. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. each.

The Poets' Birds. | The Poets' Beasts.

The Poets and Nature: Reptiles, Fishes, and Insects.

Rochefoucauld's Maxims and Moral Reflections. With Notes and an Introductory Essay by SAINTE-BEUVE. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Roll of Battle Abbey, The: A List of the Principal Warriors who came from Normandy with William the Conqueror, 1066. Printed in Gold and Colours, 5s.

Rosengarten (A.).—A Handbook of Architectural Styles. Translated by W. COLLETT-SANDARS. With 630 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Rowley (Hon. Hugh), Works by. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d. each.
Puniana; Riddias and Jokas. With numerous Illustrations.
More Puniana. Profusely Illustrated.

Runciman (James), Stories by. Post 8vo, bds., 2s. ea.; cl., 2s. 6d. ea.
Skippers and Shellbacks. Graca Balmalgn's Sweetheart.
Schools and Scholars.

Russell (Dora), Novels by.

A Country Sweetheart. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.
The Drift of Fate. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Russell (W. Clark), Novels, &c., by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Round the Galley-Fire.

In the Middle Watch.

A Voyage to the Cape.

A Book for the Hammock.

The Mystery of the 'Ocean Star.'

The Romance of Jenny Harlowe.

An Ocean Tragedy.

My Shipmate Louise.

Alone on a Wide Wide Sea.

The Good Ship 'Mohock.'

The Phantom Death

Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

Is He the Man?

The Convict Ship.

Heart of Oak.

The Tale of the Ten. With 12 Illustrations by G. MONTARD. [Feb.

The Last Entry. Frontis. [Shortly.]

On the Fo'k'sle Head. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Saint Aubyn (Alan), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

A Fellow of Trinity. With a Note by OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES and a Frontispiece.

The Junior Deano.

Orchard Damerel.

The Master of St. Benadict's.

In the Face of the World.

To His Own Master.

Fcap. 8vo, cloth boards, 1s. 6d. each.

The Old Maid's Sweetheart.

Modest Little Sara.

The Tremlett Diamonds. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Sala (George A.).—Gaslight and Daylight. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Saunders (John), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Guy Waterman.

The Lion in the Path.

The Two Dreamers.

Bound to the Wheel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Saunders (Katharine), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Margaret and Elizabeth.

The High Mills.

Heart Salvage.

Sebastian.

Joan Merryweather. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Gideon's Rock. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Scotland Yard, Past and Present: Experiences of Thirty-seven Years.

By Ex-Chief-Inspector CAVANAGH. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

Secret Out, The: One Thousand Tricks with Cards; with Entertaining Experiments in Drawing-room or 'White' Magic. By W. H. CRUMER. With 300 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d.

Sequin (L. G.), Works by.

The Country of the Passon Pley (Oherammergau) and the Highlands of Bavaria. With Map and 37 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Walks in Aiglers. With Two Maps and 16 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Senior (Wm.).—By Stream and Sea. Post 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.

Sergeant (Adeline).—Dr. Endicott's Experiment. Cr. 8vo, 3s. 6d.

Shakespeare for Children: Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare.

With Illustrations, coloured and plain, by J. MOYR SMITH. Crown 4to, cloth gilt, 3s. 6d.

Sharp (William).—Children of To-morrow. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Shelley's (Percy Bysshe) Complete Works in Verse and Prose.

Edited, Prefaced, and Annotated by R. HERNE SHEPHERD. Five Vols., crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

Poetical Works, in Three Vols.:

Vol. I. Introduction by the Editor; Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson; Shelley's Correspondence with Stockdale; The Wandering Jew; Queen Mab, with the Notes; Alastor, and other Poems; Rosalind and Helen; Prometheus Unbound; Adonais, &c.

" II. Laon and Cythna; The Cenci; Julian and Maddalo; Swellfoot the Tyrant; The Witch of Atlas; Epipsychidion; Hellas.

" III. Posthumous Poems; The Masque of Anarchy; and other Pieces.

Prose Works, in Two Vols.:

Vol. I. The Two Romances of Zastrozzi and St. Irvyne; the Dublin and Marlow Pamphlets; A Refutation of Deism; Letters to Leigh Hunt, and some Minor Writings and Fragments.

" II. The Essays; Letters from Abroad; Translations and Fragments, edited by Mrs. SHELLEY. With a Biography of Shelley, and an Index of the Prose Works.

* Also a few copies of a LARGE-PAPER EDITION, 5 vols., cloth, £2 12s. 6d.

Sheridan (General P. H.), Personal Memoirs of. With Portraits, Maps, and Facsimiles. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth, 24s.

Sheridan's (Richard Brinsley) Complete Works, with Life and

Anecdotes. Including his Dramatic Writings, his Works in Prose and Poetry, Translations, Speeches, and Jokes. With 10 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, half-bound, 7s. 6d.

The Rivals, The School for Scandal, and other Plays. Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.

Sheridan's Comedies: The Rivals and The School for Scandal. Edited, with an Introduction and Notes to each Play, and a Biographical Sketch, by BRANDER MATTHEWS. With Illustrations. Demy 8vo, half-parchment, 12s. 6d.

Sidney's (Sir Philip) Complete Poetical Works, including all those in 'Arcadia.' With Portrait, Memorial-Introduction, Notes, &c., by the Rev. A. E. GROSART, D.D. Three Vols., crown 8vo, cloth boards, 3s. 6d. each.

Signboards: Their History, including Anecdotes of Famous Taverns and Remarkable Characters. By JACOB LARWOOD and JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN. With Coloured Frontispiece and 94 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Sims (George R.), Works by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

The Ring o' Bells.

Mary Jane's Memoirs.

Mary Jane Married.

Tinkletop's Crime.

Zeph: A Circus Story, &c.

Tales of To-day.

Dramas of Life. With 60 Illustrations.

Memoirs of a Landlady.

My Two Wives.

Scenes from the Show.

The Ten Commandments: Stories.

Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s. each; cloth, 1s. 6d. each.

The Dagonet Reciter and Reader: Being Readings and Recitations in Prose and Verse, selected from his own Works by GEORGE R. SIMS.

The Case of George Candlemas. | **Dagonet Ditties.** (From *The Referee*.)

Rogues and Yagabonds. A New Edition. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

How the Poor Live; and Horrible London. Crown 8vo, picture cover, 1s.

Dagonet Abroad. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.

Sister Dora: A Biography. By MARGARET LONSDALE. With Four Illustrations. Demy 8vo, picture cover, 4d.; cloth, 6d.

Sketchley (Arthur).—A Match in the Dark. Post 8vo, boards, 2s.

Slang Dictionary (The): Etymological, Historical, and Anecdotal. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. 6d.

Smart (Hawley), Novels by.

Without Love or Licence. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s.

Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each.

Long Odds.

The Master of Bathkelly.

The Outsider.

Post 8vo, picture boards, 2s. each.

The Plunger.

Beatrice and Benedick.

Smith (J. Moyr), Works by.

The Prince of Argolla. With 130 Illustrations. Post 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

The Wooing of the Water Witch. With numerous Illustrations. Post 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Society in London. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Society in Paris: The Upper Ten Thousand. A Series of Letters from Count PAUL VASILY to a Young French Diplomat. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Somerset (Lord Henry).—Songs of Adieu. Small 4to, Jap. vel., 6s.

Spalding (T. A., LL.B.).—Elizabethan Demonology: An Essay on the Belief in the Existence of Devils. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

Speight (T. W.), Novels by.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

The Mysteries of Heron Dyke.By **Devious Ways, &c.****Hoodwinked; & Sandycroft Mystery.****The Golden Hoop.****Back to Life.****The Londwater Tragedy.****Burgo's Romance.****Quittance in Full.****A Husband from the Sea.**

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 1s. 6d. each.

A Barren Title.**Wife or No Wife?**

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

A Secret of the Sea. | **The Gray Monk.** | **The Master of Trenance.****A Minion of the Moon: A Romance of the King's Highway.**[March.
Shortly.]**Spenser for Children.** By **M. H. TOWRY.** With Coloured Illustrations
by **WALTER J. MORGAN.** Crown 4to, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.**Stafford (John).—Doris and I, &c.** Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.**Starry Heavens (The): A POETICAL BIRTHDAY BOOK.** Royal 16mo,
cloth extra, 2s. 6d.**Stedman (E. C.), Works by.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 9s. each.**Victorian Poets.****The Poets of America.****Stephens (Riccardo, M.B.).—The Cruciform Mark: The Strange
Story of RICHARD TREGENNA, Bachelor of Medicine (Univ. Edinb.)** Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.**Sterndale (R. Armitage).—The Afghan Knife: A Novel.** Crown
8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.**Stevenson (R. Louis), Works by.** Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. ea.**Travels with a Donkey.** With a Frontispiece by **WALTER CRANE.****An Inland Voyage.** With a Frontispiece by **WALTER CRANE.**

Crown 8vo, buckram, gilt top, 6s. each.

Familiar Studies of Men and Books.**The Silverado Squatters.** With Frontispiece by **J. D. STRONG.****The Merry Men.****Underwoods: Poems.****Mamories and Portraits.****Virginibus Puerisque, and other Papers.** | **Ballads.****Prince Otto.****Across the Plains, with other Memories and Essays.****Weir of Hermiston.** (R. L. STEVENSON'S LAST WORK.)**Songs of Travel.** Crown 8vo, buckram, 5s.**New Arabian Nights.** Crown 8vo, buckram, gilt top, 6s.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.**The Suicide Club; and The Rajah's Diamond.** (From **NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS.**) With
Eight Illustrations by **W. J. HENNESSY.** Crown 8vo, cloth, 5s.**The Edinburgh Edition of the Works of Robert Louis Stevenson.** Twenty-seven
Vols., demy 8vo. This Edition (which is limited to 1,000 copies) is sold in Sets only, the price of
which may be learned from the Booksellers. The First Volume was published Nov., 1894.**Stories from Foreign Novelists.** With Notices by **HELEN** and
ALICE ZIMMERN. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.**Strange Manuscript (A) Found in a Copper Cylinder.** Crown
8vo, cloth extra, with 19 Illustrations by **GILBERT GAUL,** 5s.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.**Strange Secrets.** Told by **PERCY FITZGERALD, CONAN DOYLE, FLOR-
ENCE MARRYAT, &c.** Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.**Strutt (Joseph).—The Sports and Pastimes of the People of
England; including the Rural and Domestic Recreations, May Games, Mummeries, Shows, &c., from
the Earliest Period to the Present Time.** Edited by **WILLIAM HONE.** With 140 Illustrations. Crown
8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.**Swift's (Dean) Choice Works, in Prose and Verse.** With Memoir,
Portrait, and Facsimiles of the Maps in 'Gulliver's Travels.' Crown 8vo, cloth, 7s. 6d.**Gulliver's Travels, and A Tale of a Tub.** Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.**Jonathan Swift: A Study.** By **J. CHURTON COLLINS.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 8s.

Swinburne (Algernon C.), Works by.

Selections from the Poetical Works of A. C. Swinburne. Fcap. 8vo, 6s.
Atalanta in Calydon. Crown 8vo, 6s.
Ghastelard: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 7s.
Poems and Ballads. FIRST SERIES. Crown 8vo, or fcap. 8vo, 9s.
Poems and Ballads. SECOND SERIES. Crown 8vo, 9s.
Poems and Ballads. THIRD SERIES. Cr. 8vo, 7s.
Songs before Sunrise. Crown 8vo, 10s. 6d.
Bothwell: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 12s. 6d.
Songs of Two Nations. Crown 8vo, 6s.
George Chapman. (See Vol. II. of G. CHAPMAN'S Works.) Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.
Essays and Studies. Crown 8vo, 12s.
Erechtheus: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 6s.
A Note on Charlotte Brontë. Cr. 8vo, 6s.

A Study of Shakespeare. Crown 8vo, 8s.
Songs of the Springtides. Crown 8vo, 6s.
Studies in Song. Crown 8vo, 7s.
Mary Stuart: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 8s.
Tristram of Lyonesse. Crown 8vo, 9s.
A Century of Roundels. Small 4to, 8s.
A Midsummer Holiday. Crown 8vo, 7s.
Marino Fallero: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 6s.
A Study of Victor Hugo. Crown 8vo, 6s.
Miscellaneous. Crown 8vo, 12s.
Loorine: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 6s.
A Study of Ben Jonson. Crown 8vo, 7s.
The Sisters: A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 6s.
Astrophel, &c. Crown 8vo, 7s.
Studies in Prose and Poetry. Cr. 8vo, 9s.
The Tale of Balen. Crown 8vo, 7s.

Syntax's (Dr.) Three Tours: In Search of the Picturesque, in Search of Consolation, and in Search of a Wife. With ROWLANDSON'S Coloured Illustrations, and Life of the Author by J. C. HOTTEN. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Taine's History of English Literature. Translated by HENRY VAN LAUN. Four Vols., small demy 8vo, cloth boards, 30s.—POPULAR EDITION, Two Vols., large crown 8vo, cloth extra, 15s.

Taylor (Bayard). — Diversions of the Echo Club: Burlesques of Modern Writers. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Taylor (Tom). — Historical Dramas. Containing 'Clancarty,' 'Jeanne Darc,' 'Twixt Axe and Crowe,' 'The Fool's Revenge,' 'Arkwright's Wife,' 'Anne Boleyn,' 'Plot and Passion.' Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.
 . The Plays may also be had separately, at 1s. each.

Tennyson (Lord): A Biographical Sketch. By H. J. JENNINGS. Post 8vo, portrait cover, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Thackerayana: Notes and Anecdotes. With Coloured Frontispiece and Hundreds of Sketches by WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Thames, A New Pictorial History of the. By A. S. KRAUSSE. With 340 Illustrations. Post 8vo, picture cover, 1s.

Thiers (Adolphe). — History of the Consulate and Empire of France under Napoleon. Translated by D. FORBES CAMPBELL and JOHN STEBBING. With 36 Steel Plates. 12 Vols., demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. each.

Thomas (Bertha), Novels by. Cr. 8vo, cl., 3s. 6d. ea.; post 8vo, 2s. ea.
The Violin-Player. | **Proud Malsie.**
Cressida. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Thomson's Seasons, and The Castle of Indolence. With Introduction by ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, and 48 Illustrations. Post 8vo, half-bound, 2s.

Thornbury (Walter), Books by.

The Life and Correspondence of J. M. W. Turner. With Illustrations in Colours. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Old Stories Re-told.

| **Tales for the Marines.**

Timbs (John), Works by. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d. each.

The History of Clubs and Club Life in London: Anecdotes of its Famous Coffee-houses, Hostleries, and Taverns. With 42 Illustrations.
English Eccentrics and Eccentricities: Stories of Delusions, Impostures, Sporting Scenes, Eccentric Artists, Theatrical Folk, &c. With 48 Illustrations.

Transvaal (The). By JOHN DE VILLIERS. With Map. Crown 8vo, 1s.

Trollope (Anthony), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
The Way We Live Now. | **Mr. Scarborough's Family.**
Frau Frohmann. | **The Land-Leaguers.**

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Kept in the Dark.
The Golden Lion of Granpere.

| **The American Senator.**
 | **John Caldigate.** | **Marion Fay.**

Trollope (Frances E.), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
Like Ships Upon the Sea. | **Mabel's Progress.** | **Anne Furness.**

Trollope (T. A.).—Diamond Cut Diamond. Post 8vo, illust. bds., 2s.

Trowbridge (J. T.).—Farnell's Folly. Post 8vo, illust. boards, 2s.

Twain (Mark), Books by.

The Choice Works of Mark Twain. Revised and Corrected throughout by the Author. With Life, Portrait, and numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra (illustrated), 7s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each
The Innocent Abroad; or, **The New Pilgrim's Progress.** With 234 Illustrations. (The Two Shilling Edition is entitled **Mark Twain's Pleasure Trip.**)

The Gilded Age. By MARK TWAIN and C. D. WARNER. With 212 Illustrations.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. With 111 Illustrations.

The Prince and the Pauper. With 190 Illustrations.

Life on the Mississippi. With 300 Illustrations.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. With 174 Illustrations by E. W. KEMBLE.

A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur. With 220 Illustrations by DAN BEARD.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

Roughing It; and **The Innocents at Home.** With 200 Illustrations by F. A. FRASER.

The American Claimant. With 82 Illustrations by HAL HURST and others.

Tom Sawyer Abroad. With 26 Illustrations by DAN BEARD.

Tom Sawyer, Detective, &c. With Photogravure Portrait.

Pudd'nhead Wilson. With Portrait and Six Illustrations by LOUIS LOBB.

Mark Twain's Library of Humour. With 197 Illustrations by E. W. KEMBLE.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s. each.

The £1,000,000 Bank-Note.

The Stolen White Elephant.

A Tramp Abroad.

Mark Twain's Sketches. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Personal Recollections of Juan of Aro. With Twelve Illustrations by F. V. DU MOND.
 Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Tytler (C. C. Fraser).—Mistress Judith: A Novel. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Tytler (Sarah), Novels by.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

Lady Bel.

Boried Diamonds.

The Blackhall Ghosts.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

What She Came Through.

Citoyenne Jacqueline.

The Bride's Pass.

Saint Mungo's City.

The Huguenot Family.

Noblesse Oblige.

Beauty and the Beast.

Disappeared.

The Macdonald Lass. With Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Upward (Allen), Novels by.

A Crown of Straw. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. each; post 8vo, picture boards, 2s. each.

The Queen Against Owen.

The Prince of Balkistan.

Vashti and Esther. By 'Belle' of *The World*. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Villari (Linda).—A Double Bond: A Story. Fcap. 8vo, 1s.

Vizetelly (Ernest A.).—The Scorpion: A Romance of Spain. With a Frontispiece. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Walford (Edward, M.A.), Works by.

Walford's County Families of the United Kingdom (1897). Containing the Descent, Birth, Marriage, Education, &c., of 12,000 Heads of Families, their Heirs, Offices, Addresses, Clubs &c. Royal 8vo, cloth gilt, 50s.

Walford's Shilling Peerage (1897). Containing a List of the House of Lords, Scotch and Irish Peers, &c. 32mo, cloth, 1s.

Walford's Shilling Baronetage (1897). Containing a List of the Baronets of the United Kingdom, Biographical Notices, Addresses, &c. 32mo, cloth, 1s.

Walford's Shilling Knightage (1897). Containing a List of the Knights of the United Kingdom, Biographical Notices, Addresses, &c. 32mo, cloth, 1s.

Walford's Shilling House of Commons (1897). Containing a List of all the Members of the New Parliament, their Addresses, Clubs, &c. 32mo, cloth, 1s.

Walford's Complete Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage, and House of Commons (1897). Royal 32mo, cloth, gilt edges, 5s.

Tales of our Great Families. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Waller (S. E.).—Sebastiani's Secret. With Nine full-page Illustrations by the Author. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Walton and Cotton's Complete Angler; or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation, by IZAAK WALTON; and Instructions How to Angle, for a Trout or Grayling in a clear Stream, by CHARLES COTTON. With Memoirs and Notes by Sir HARRIS NICOLAS, and 62 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth antique, 7s. 6d.

Walt Whitman, Poems by. Edited, with Introduction, by WILLIAM M. ROSSETTI. With Portrait. Crown 8vo, hand-made paper and buckram, 6s.

Ward (Herbert), Books by.

Five Years with the Gongo Cannibals. With 92 Illustrations. Royal 8vo, cloth, 14s.

My Life with Stanley's Rear Guard. With Map. Post 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Warner (Charles Dudley).—A Roundabout Journey. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Warrant to Execute Charles I. A Facsimile, with the 59 Signatures and Seals. Printed on paper 22 in. by 14 in. 2s.

Warrant to Execute Mary Queen of Scots. A Facsimile, including Queen Elizabeth's Signature and the Great Seal. 2s.

Washington's (George) Rules of Civility Traced to their Sources and Restored by MONCURE D. CONWAY. Fcap. 8vo, Japanese vellum, 2s. 6d.

Wassermann (Lillias), Novels by.

The Daffodil. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

The Marquise of Carabas. By AARON WATSON and LILLIAS WASSERMANN. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Weather, How to Foretell the, with the Pocket Spectroscope.

By F. W. CORY. With Ten Illustrations. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Westall (William), Novels by.

Trust-Money. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

Sons of Bellal. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

With the Red Eagle: A Romance of the Tyrol. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Westbury (Atha).—The Shadow of Hilton Fernbrook: A Romance of Maoriland. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Whist, How to Play Solo. By ABRAHAM S. WILKS and CHARLES F. PARDON. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

White (Gilbert).—The Natural History of Selborne. Post 8vo, printed on laid paper and half-bound, 2s.

Williams (W. Mattieu, F.R.A.S.), Works by.

Science in Short Chapters. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

A Simple Treatise on Heat. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth, 2s. 6d.

The Chemistry of Cookery. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

The Chemistry of Iron and Steel Making. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 9s.

A Vindication of Phrenology. With Portrait and 43 Illusts. Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. 6d.

Williamson (Mrs. F. H.).—A Child Widow. Post 8vo, bds., 2s.

Wills (C. J.).—An Easy-going Fellow. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

Wilson (Dr. Andrew, F.R.S.E.), Works by.

Chapters on Evolution. With 259 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Leaves from a Naturalist's Note-Book. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Leisure-Time Studies. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Studies in Life and Sense. With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Common Accidents: How to Treat Them. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

Glimpses of Nature. With 35 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Winter (John Strange), Stories by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. each.

Cavalry Life.

| **Regimental Legends.**

Cavalry Life and Regimental Legends. LIBRARY EDITION, set in new type and handsomely bound. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d. [Shortly.]

A Soldier's Children. With 34 Illustrations by E. G. THOMSON and E. STUART HARDY. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

Wissmann (Hermann von).—My Second Journey through Equatorial Africa. With 92 Illustrations. Demy 8vo, cloth, 16s.

Wood (H. F.), Detective Stories by. Post 8vo, boards, 2s. each.
The Passenger from Scotland Yard. | **The Englishman of the Rue Cain.**

Wood (Lady).—Sabina: A Novel. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

Woolley (Celia Parker).—Rachel Armstrong; or, Love and Theology. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.; cloth, 2s. 6d.

Wright (Thomas), Works by. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d. each.
The Caricature History of the Georges. With 400 Caricatures, Squibs, &c.
History of Caricature and of the Grotesque in Art, Literature, Sculpture, and Painting. Illustrated by F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

Wynman (Margaret).—My Flirtations. With 13 Illustrations by J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE. Crown 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.; post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s.

Yates (Edmund), Novels by. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.
Land at Last. | **The Forlorn Hope.** | **Castaway.**

Zangwill (I.).—Ghetto Tragedies. With Three Illustrations by A. S. BOYD. Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 2s. net.

Zola (Emile), Novels by. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

The Fat and the Thin. Translated by ERNEST A. VIZETELLY.

Money. Translated by ERNEST A. VIZETELLY.

The Downfall. Translated by E. A. VIZETELLY.

The Dream. Translated by ELIZA CHASE. With Eight Illustrations by JEANNIOT.

Doctor Pascal. Translated by E. A. VIZETELLY. With Portrait of the Author.

Loures. Translated by ERNEST A. VIZETELLY.

Rome. Translated by ERNEST A. VIZETELLY.

SOME BOOKS CLASSIFIED IN SERIES.

. For fuller cataloguing, see alphabetical arrangement, pp. 1-26.

The Mayfair Library. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. per Volume.

A Journey Round My Room. By X. DE MAISTRE.

Translated by Sir HENRY ATWELL.

Quips and Quiddities. By W. D. ADAMS.

The Agony Column of 'The Times.'

Melancholy Anatomised: An Abridgement of BURTON.

Poetical Ingenues. By W. T. DOBSON.

The Cupboard Papers. By FIN-BEC.

W. S. Gilbert's Plays. Three Series.

Songs of Irish Wit and Humour.

Animals and their Masters. By Sir A. HELPS.

Social Pressure. By Sir A. HELPS.

Curiosities of Criticism. By H. J. JENNINGS.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table. By OLIVER

WENDELL HOLMES.

Pencil and Palette. By R. KEMPT.

Little Essays: from LAMB'S LETTERS.

Forensic Anecdotes. By JACOB LARWOOD.

Theatrical Anecdotes. By JACOB LARWOOD.

Witch Stories. By E. LYNN LINTON.

Ourselves. By E. LYNN LINTON.

Pastimes and Players. By R. MACGREGOR.

New Paul and Virginia. By W. H. MALLOCK.

The New Republic. By W. H. MALLOCK.

Fuck on Pegasus. By H. C. PENNELL.

Pegasus Re-saddled. By H. C. PENNELL.

Muses of Mayfair. Edited by H. C. PENNELL.

Thoreau: His Life and Aims. By H. A. PAGE.

Funiana. By Hon. HUGH ROWLEY.

More Funiana. By Hon. HUGH ROWLEY.

The Philosophy of Handwriting.

By Stream and Sea. By WILLIAM SENIOR.

Leaves from a Naturalist's Note-Book. By Dr

ANDREW WILSON.

The Golden Library. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. per Volume.

Diversions of the Echo Club. BYARD TAYLOR.

Songs for Sailors. By W. C. BENNETT.

Lives of the Necromancers. By W. GODWIN.

The Poetical Works of Alexander Pope.

Scenes of Country Life. By EDWARD JESSE.

Tale for a Chimney Corner. By LEIGH HUNT.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table. By

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

La Mort d'Arthur: Selections from MALLORY.

Provincial Letters of Blaise Pascal.

Maxims and Reflections of Rochefoucauld.

Handy Novels. Fcap. 8vo, cloth boards, 1s. 6d. each.

The Old Maid's Sweetheart. By A. ST. AUEYN.

Modest Little Sara. By ALAN ST. AUBYN.

Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. M. E. COLERIDGE.

Taken from the Enemy. By H. NEWHOLT.

A Loaf Soul. By W. L. ALDEN.

Dr. Palliser's Patient. By GRANT ALLEN.

Monte Carlo Stories. By JOAN BARRETT.

Black Spirits and White. By R. A. CRAM.

My Library. Printed on laid paper, post 8vo, half-Roxburgh, 2s. 6d. each.
 Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare.

By W. S. LANOOR.

The Journal of Maurice de Guerin.

Christie Johnstone. By CHARLES READE.

Peg Woffington. By CHARLES READE.

The Dramatic Essays of Charles Lamb.

The Pocket Library. Post 8vo, printed on laid paper and hf.-bd., 2s. each.

The Essays of Elia. By CHARLES LAMB.

Robinson Crusoe. Illustrated by G. CRUIKSHANK.

Whims and Oddities. By THOMAS HOOD.

The Barber's Chair. By DOUGLAS FERROLD.

Gastronomy. By BRILLAT-SAVARIN.

The Epicurean, &c. By THOMAS MOORE.

Leigh Hunt's Essays. Edited by E. OLLIER.

White's Natural History of Selborne.

Gulliver's Travels, &c. By Dean SWIFT.

Plays by RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

Anecdotes of the Clergy. By JACOB LARWOOD.

Thomson's Seasons. Illustrated.

Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table and The Professor at the Breakfast-Table. By O. W. HOLMES.

THE PICCADILLY NOVELS.

LIBRARY EDITIONS OF NOVELS, many Illustrated, crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

By Mrs. ALEXANDER.
A Life Interest. | Mona's Choice.
By Woman's Wit.

By F. M. ALLEN.
Green as Grass.

By GRANT ALLEN.
Philistia. | The Great Taboo.
Strange Stories. | Damareeq's Daughter.
Babylon. | Duchess of Powysland.
For Maimie's Sake, | Blood Royal.
In all Shades. | Ivan Great's Master-
The Beckoning Hand. | piece.
The Devil's Die. | The Scallywag.
This Mortal Coil. | At Market Value.
The Tents of Shem. | Under Sealed Orders.

By MARY ANDERSON.
Othello's Occupation.

By EDWIN L. ARNOLD.
Phra the Phœnician. | Constable of St. Nicholas.

By ROBERT BARR.
In a Steamer Chair. | From Whose Bourne.

By FRANK BARRETT.
The Woman of the Iron Bracelets.
The Harding Scandal.
A Missing Witness.

By 'BELLE.'
Vashti and Esther.

By Sir W. BESANT and J. RICE.
Ready-Money Mortiboy. | By Celia's Arbour.
My Little Girl. | Chaplain of the Fleet.
With Harp and Crown. | The Seamy Side.
This Son of Vulcan. | The Case of Mr. Lucraft.
The Golden Butterfy. | In Trafalgar's Bay.
The Monks of Thelema. | The Ten Years' Tenant.

By Sir Walter BESANT.
All Sorts and Condi- | The Revolt of Man.
tions of Men. | The Bell of St. Paul's.
The Captains' Room. | The Holy Eose.
All in a Garden Fair. | Armored of Lyonesse.
Dorothy Forster. | S. Katherine's by Tower
Uncle Jack. | Verbena Gamella Sto-
The World Went Very | phanotis.
Well Then. | The Ivory Gate.
Children of Gibeon. | The Rebel Queen.
Herr Paulus. | Beyond the Dreams of
For Faith and Freedom. | Avarice.
To Call Her Mine. | The Master Craftaman.

By PAUL BOURGET.
A Living Lie.

By ROBERT BUCHANAN.
Shadow of the Sword. | The New Abe'ard.
A Child of Nature. | Matt. | Rachel Dene.
God and the Man. | Master of the Mine.
Martyrdom of Madeline | The Heir of Linse.
Love Me for Ever. | Women and the Man.
Annau Water. | Red and White Heather.
Foxglove Manor. | Lady Kilpatrick.

ROB. BUCHANAN & HY. MURRAY.
The Charlatan.

By J. MITCHELL CHAPPLE.
The Minor Chord.

By HALL CAINE.
The Shadow of a Crime. | The Deemster.
A Son of Hagar.

By MACLAREN COBBAN.
The Red Sultan. | The Burden of Isabel.

By MORT. & FRANCES COLLINS.
Transmigration. | From Midnight to Mid-
Backsmith & Scholar. | night.
The Village Comedy. | You Play me False.

By WILKIE COLLINS.
Armadale. | After Dark. | The Frozen Deep.
No Name. | The Two Destinies.
Antonina. | The Law and the Lady.
Basil. | The Haunted Hotel.
Hide and Seek. | The Fallen Leaves.
The Dead Secret. | Jezebel's Daughter.
Queen of Hearts. | The Black Robe.
My Miscellanies. | Heart and Science.
The Woman in White. | 'I Say No.'
The Moonstone. | Little Novels.
Mad and Wife. | The Evil Genius.
Poor Miss Finch. | The Legacy of Cain
Miss or Mrs. ? | A Rogue's Life.
The New Magdalen. | Blind Love.

By E. H. COOPER.
Geoffrey Hamilton.

By Y. CECIL COTES.
Two Girls on a Barge.

By C. EGBERT CRADDOCK.
His Vanished Star.

By H. N. CRELLIN.
Romances of the Old Seraglio.

By MATT CRIM.
The Adventures of a Fair Rebel.

By S. R. CROCKETT and others.
Tales of Our Coast.

By B. M. CROKER.
Diana Barrington. | Village Tales & Jungle
Proper Fride. | Tragedies.
A Family Likeness. | The Real Lady Hilda.
Pretty Miss Nevills. | Married or Single ?
A Bird of Passage. | Two Masters.
'To Let.' | Mr. Jervis. | In the Kingdom of Kerry

By WILLIAM CYPLES.
Hearts of Gold.

By ALPHONSE DAUDET.
The Evangelist; or, Port Salvation.

By H. COLEMAN DAVIDSON.
Mr. Sadler's Daughters.

By ERASMUS DAWSON.
The Fountain of Youth.

By JAMES DE MILLE.
A Castle in Spain.

By J. LEITH DERWENT.
Our Lady of Tears. | Circe's Lovers.

By DICK DONOVAN.
Tracked to Doom. | The Mystery of Jamaica
Mad from Manchester. | Terrace.
The Chronicles of Michael Danevitch.

By A. CONAN DOYLE.
The Firm of Girdlestone.

By S. JEANNETTE DUNCAN.
A Daughter of To-day. | Vernon's Aunt.

By G. MANVILLE FENN.
The New Mistress. | The Tiger Lily.
Witness to the Deed. | The White Virgin.

By PERCY FITZGERALD.
Fatal Zero.

By R. E. FRANCILLON.
One by One. | Ropes of Sand.
A Dog and his Shadow. | Jack Doyle's Daughter.
A Real Queen.

Prefaced by Sir BARTLE FRERE.
Pandurang Hari.

By EDWARD GARRETT.
The Capel Girls.

THE PICCADILLY (3/6) NOVELS—continued.

By PAUL GAULOT.

The Red Shirts.

By CHARLES GIBBON.

Robin Gray.

The Golden Shaft.

Loving a Dream.

By E. GLANVILLE.

The Lost Heiress.

The Fossilker.

A Fair Colonist.

The Golden Rock.

By E. J. GOODMAN.

The Fate of Herbert Wayae.

By Rev. S. BARING GOULD.

Red Spider.

Eve.

By CECIL GRIFFITH.

Corinthia Marazion.

By SYDNEY GRUNDY.

The Days of his Vanity.

By THOMAS HARDY.

Under the Greenwood Tree.

By BRET HARTE.

A Wolf of the Plains.

A Protégée of Jack

A Ward of the Golden

Hamlin's

Gate.

Clarence.

A Sappho of Green

Barker's Luck.

Cel. Starbottle's Client.

Devil's Ford. (celsior.)

Susy. | Sally Dow's.

The Crusade of the 'Ex-

Bell-Ringer of Angels.

Three Partners.

By JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Garth.

Beatriz Eandolph.

Ellice Quentin.

David Poindexter's Dis-

Sebastian Strome.

appearance.

Dust.

The Spectre of the

Fortune's Fool.

Camera.

By Sir A. HELPS.

Ivan de Biroc.

By I. HENDERSON.

Agatha Page.

By G. A. HENTY.

Rujnh the Juggler.

Dorothy's Double.

By JOHN HILL.

The Common Ancestor.

By Mrs. HUNGERFORD.

Lady Verner's Flight.

A Point of Conscience.

The Red-House Mystery

Nora Greine.

The Three Graces.

An Anxious Moment.

Professor's Experiment.

April's Lady.

By Mrs. ALFRED HUNT.

The Leadon Gasket.

Self Condemned.

That Other Person.

Mrs. Juliet.

By C. J. CUTCLIFFE HYNE.

Honour of Thieves.

By R. ASHE KING.

A Drawn Game. | The Wearing of the Green.

By EDMOND LEPELLETIER.

Madame Sans-Gêne.

By HARRY LINDSAY.

Rhoda Roberts.

By HENRY W. LUCY.

Gideon Fleyce.

By E. LYNN LINTON.

Patricia Kemball.

The Atonement of Leam

Under which Lord?

Dundas.

'My Love' | Ioue.

The World Well Lost.

Faaton Carew.

The One Too Many.

Sowing the Wind.

Dulcie Everton.

By JUSTIN MCCARTHY.

A Fair Saxon.

Donna Quixote.

Linley Rochford.

Maid of Athens.

Dear Lady Diedein.

The Comet of a Season.

Camfola.

The Dictator.

Waterdale Neighbours.

Red Diamonds.

My Enemy's Daughter.

The Riddle Ring.

Miss Misanthrope.

By JUSTIN H. MCCARTHY.

A London Legend.

The Royal Christopher.

By GEORGE MACDONALD.

Heather and Snow.

Phantastes.

By L. T. MEADE.

A Soldier of Fortune.

The Voice of the

In an Iron Grip.

Chermer.

By LEONARD MERRICK.

This Stage of Fools.

By BERTRAM MITFORD.

The Gun-Runner.

The King's Assegai.

The Luck of Gerard

Kenshaw Fanning's

Ridgelay.

Quest.

By J. E. MUDDOCK.

Maid Marian and Robin

Hood.

Basile the Jester.

Young Lochinvar.

A Life's Atonement.

Cynic Fortune.

Joseph's Coat.

The Way of the World.

Coals of Fire.

Bob Martin's Little Girl.

Old Blazer's Hero.

Time's Revenge.

Val Strange. | Hearts.

A Wasted Crime.

A Model Father.

In Direst Peril.

By the Gate of the Sea.

Mount Despair.

A Bit of Human Nature.

A Capful o' Nails.

First Person Singular.

By MURRAY and HERMAN.

The Bishops' Bible.

Paul Jones's Alias.

One Traveller Returns.

By HUME NISBET.

'Ball Up' |

By W. E. NORRIS.

Saint Ann's.

Billy Bellow.

By G. OHNET.

A Weird Gift.

By Mrs. OLIPHANT.

The Sorceress.

By OUIDA.

Held in Bondage.

Two Little Wooden

Strathmore.

Is a Winter City. (Shoes

Chandos.

Friendship.

Under Two Flags.

Mothe. | Ruffino.

Idalia. | Gage.

Pipistrello.

Cecil Castlemaine's

A Village Communs.

Tricotrin. | Puck.

Bimbi. | Wanda.

Folie Farine.

Frescoes. | Othmar.

A Dog of Flanders.

In Maremma.

Pascarel. | Signs.

Syrin. | Guilderey.

Princess Napraxine.

Santa Barbara.

Ariadne.

Two Offenders.

By MARGARET A. PAUL.

Gentle and Simple.

By JAMES PAYN.

Lost Sir Messingherd.

High Spirits.

Less Black than We're

Under One Roof.

Painted.

Glow-worm Tales.

A Confidential Agent.

The Talk of the Town

A Grape from a Thorn.

Holiday Tasks.

In Peril and Privation.

For Cash Only.

The Mystery of Mir-

The Burnt Million.

By Proxy. (bridge.

The Word and the Will

The Canon's Ward.

Sunny Stories.

Walter's Word.

A Trying Patient.

By WILL PAYNE.

Jerry the Dreamer.

By Mrs. CAMPBELL PRAED.

Outlaw and Lawmaker.

Mrs. Tregaskiss.

Christina Chard.

By E. C. PRICE.

Valentina. | Foreigners. | Mrs. Lancaster's Rival.

By RICHARD PRYCE.

Miss Maxwell's Affections.

By CHARLES READE.

Fog Woffington; and

Love Me Little, Love

Christie Johnstons.

Me Long.

Hard Cash.

The Double Marriage.

Cloister & the Hearth.

Foul Play. (Place.

Never Too Late to Mend

Put Yourself in His

The Course of True

A Terrible Temptation.

Love Never Did Run

A Simpleton.

Smooth; and Single-

A Woman-Hater.

heart and Doubleface.

The Jilt, & other Stories;

Autobiography of a

& Good Stories of Men

Thief; Jack of all

and other Animals.

Trades; A Hero and

A Perilous Secret.

a Martyr; and The

Readians; and Bible

Wandering Heir.

Characters.

Griffith Gaunt.

THE PICCADILLY (3/6) NOVELS—continued.

By Mrs. J. H. RIDDELL.
Weird Stories.

By AMELIE RIVES.
Barbara Dering.

By F. W. ROBINSON.
The Hands of Justice. | Woman in the Dark.

By DORA RUSSELL.
A Country Sweetheart. | The Drift of Fate.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL.
Round the Galley-Fire. | My Shipmate Louise.
In the Middle Watch. | Alone on Wide Wide Sea
A Voyage to the Cape. | The Phantom Death.
Book for the Hammock. | In He the Mac?
The Mystery of the | The Good Ship 'Mo-
'Gocan Star.' | heck.'
The Romance of Jenny | The Convict Ship.
Harlowe. | Heart of Oak.
An Ocean Tragedy. | The Tale of the Ten.

By JOHN SAUNDERS.
Guy Waterman. | The Two Dreamers.
Bound to the Wheel. | The Lion in the Path.

By KATHARINE SAUNDERS.
Margaret and Elizabeth | Heart Salvage.
Gidson's Rock. | Sebastian.
The High Mills.

By ADELINE SERGEANT.
Dr. Endicott's Experiment.

By HAWLEY SMART.
Without Love or Licence. | Long Odds.
The Master of Eastkelly. | The Outsider.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.
A Secret of the Sea. | The Master of Trenance.
The Grey Monk. | A Minion of the Moon.

By ALAN ST. AUBYN.
A Fellow of Trinity. | In Face of the World.
The Junior Deac. | Orchard Damerel.
Master of St. Benedict's. | The Tremlett Diamonds.
To his Own Master.

By JOHN STAFFORD.
Doris and I.

By R. A. STERNDALÉ.
The Afghan Knife.

By BERTHA THOMAS.
Frood Maleis. | The Violin-Player.

By ANTHONY TROLLOPE.
The Way we Live Now. | Scarborough's Family
Frau Frohmann. | The Lead-Leaguers.

By FRANCES E. TROLLOPE.
Like Ships upon the | Anne Furness.
Sea. | Mabel's Progress.

By IVAN TURGENIEFF, &c.
Stories from Foreign Novelists.

By MARK TWAIN.
A Tramp Abroad. | Tom Sawyer Abroad.
The American Claimant. | Fudd'nhead Wilson.
The £1,000,000 Bank-note | Tom Sawyer Detective.

By C. C. FRASER-TYTLER.
Mistress Judith.

By SARAH TYTLER.
Lady Bell. | The Blackball Ghosts.
Buried Diamonds. | The Macdonald Lease.

By ALLEN UPWARD.
The Queen against Owen | The Prince of Balkistan

By E. A. VIZETELLY.
The Scorpion: A Romance of Spain.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.
Sons of Bellel.

By ATHA WESTBURY.
The Shadow of Bilton Fernbrook.

By JOHN STRANGE WINTER.
Cavalry Life and Regimental Legends.

By MARGARET WYNMAN
My Flirtations.

By E. ZOLA.
The Downfall. | Money. | Lourdes.
The Dream. | The Fat and the Thin.
Dr. Pascal. | Rome.

CHEAP EDITIONS OF POPULAR NOVELS.

Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

By ARTEMUS WARD.
Artemus Ward Complete.

By EDMOND ABOUT.
The Fellah.

By HAMILTON AÏDÉ.
Carr of Carriyoo. | Confidences.

By MARY ALBERT.
Brooke Finchley's Daughter.

By Mrs. ALEXANDER.
Maid, Wife or Widow? | Valerie's Fate.
Blind Fate.

By GRANT ALLEN.
Phyllis. | The Great Taboo.
Strange Stories. | Damaree's Daughter.
Babylon. | Duchess of Fowysland.
For Maimie's Sake. | Blood Royal. [piece-
In all Shades. | Ivan Greet's Master.
The Beckoning Hand. | The Scallywag.
The Devil's Die. | This Mortal Coil.
The Tents of Shem. | At Market Valce.

By E. LESTER ARNOLD.
Phra the Phœnician.

By SHELSLEY BEAUCHAMP.
Grantley Grange.

By FRANK BARRETT.
Fettered for Life. | A Prodigal's Progress.
Little Lady Linton. | Found Guilty.
Between Life & Death. | A Recalling Vengeance.
The Sin of Olga Zascou- | For Love and Honour.
lich. | John Ford; and His
Folly Morrison. | Helpmate.
Lieut. Barnabas. | The Woman of the Iron
Honest Davie. | Bracelets.

By Sir W. BESANT and J. RICE.

Ready-Money Mortiboy | By Cella's Arbour.
My Little Girl. | Chaplain of the Fleet.
With Harp and Crown. | The Seamy Side.
This Sea of Valcan. | The Case of Mr. Lucraft.
The Golden Butterfly. | In Trafalgar's Bay.
The Monks of Thelema. | The Ten Years' Tenant.

By Sir WALTER BESANT.

All Sorts and Condi- | To Call Her Mine.
tions of Men. | The Bell of St. Paul's.
The Captains' Room. | The Holy Rose.
All in a Garden Fair. | Armored of Lyonsese.
Dorothy Forester. | S. Catherine's by Tower.
Uncle Jack. | Verhena Camellia Ste-
The World Went Very | phanotis.
Well Then. | The Ivory Gate.
Children of Gibeon. | The Rebel Queen.
Herr Pauline. | Beyond the Dreams of
For Faith and Freedom. | Avarice.

By AMBROSE BIERCE.
In the Midst of Life.

By FREDERICK BOYLÉ.
Camp Notes. | Chronicles of No-man's
Savage Life. | Land.

By BRET HARTE.
California Stories. | Flip. | Maruja.
Gabriel Conroy. | A Phyllis of the Sierree.
The Luck of Roaring | A Wolf of the Fleine.
Camp. | A Ward of the Golden
An Heiress of Red Dog. | Gate.

By HAROLD BRYDGES.
Uncle Sam at Home.

TWO-SHILLING NOVELS—continued.

By ROBERT BUCHANAN.

Shadow of the Sword.	The Martyrdom of Madeline.
A Child of Nature.	The New Ahelard.
God and the Man.	Matt.
Love Me for Ever.	The Heir of Linne.
Foxglove Manor.	Woman and the Man.
The Master of the Mine.	Rachel Dene.
Annan Water.	

By BUCHANAN and MURRAY.
The Charlatan.

By HALL CAINE.

The Shadow of a Crime.	The Deemster.
A Son of Hagar.	

By Commander CAMERON.
The Cruise of the 'Black Prince.'By Mrs. LOVETT CAMERON.
Deceivers Ever. | Juliet's Guardian.By HAYDEN CARRUTH.
The Adventures of Jones.

By AUSTIN CLARE.

For the Love of a Lass.

By Mrs. ARCHER CLIVE.

Paul Ferroll.
Why Paul Ferroll Killed his Wife.By MACLAREN COBBAN.
The Cure of Souls. | The Red Sultan.By C. ALLSTON COLLINS.
The Bar Sinister.By MORT. & FRANCES COLLINS.
Sweet Anne Page. | Sweet and Twenty.
Transmigration. | The Village Comedy.
From Midnight to Midnight. | You Play me False.
A Fight with Fortune. | Blacksmith and Scholar
Frances.

By WILKIE COLLINS.

Armedale. After Dark.	My Miscellanies.
No Name.	The Women in White.
Antonina.	The Moonstone.
Basil.	Man and Wife.
Hide and Seek.	Poor Miss Pluch.
The Dead Secret.	The Fallen Leaves.
Queen of Hearts.	Jezebel's Daughter.
Miss or Mrs. ?	The Black Robe.
The New Magdalen.	Heart and Science
The Frozen Deep.	'I Say No!'
The Law and the Lady	The Evil Genius.
The Two Destinies.	Little Novels.
The Haunted Hotel.	Legacy of Cain.
A Rogue's Life.	Blind Love.

By M. J. COLQUHOUN.

Every Inch a Soldier.

By DUTTON COOK.

Leo. | Paul Foster's Daughter.

By C. EGBERT CRADDOCK.
The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains.

By MATT CRIM.

The Adventures of a Fair Rebel.

By B. M. CROKER.

Pretty Miss Nevilles.	A Family Likeness.
Diana Barrington.	Village Tales and Jungle
'To Let.'	Tragedies.
A Bird of Passage.	Two Masters.
Proper Fride.	Mr. Jervie.

By W. CYPLES.

Hearts of Gold.

By ALPHONSE DAUDET.
The Evangelist; or, Port Salvation.By ERASMUS DAWSON.
The Fountain of Youth.

By JAMES DE MILLE.

A Castle in Spain.

By J. LEITH DERWENT.
Our Lady of Tears. | Circe's Lovers.By CHARLES DICKENS.
Sketches by Boz.

By DICK DONOVAN.

The Man-Hunter.	In the Grip of the Law.
Tracked and Taken.	From Information Received.
Caught at Last!	Tracked to Doom.
Wanted!	Link by Link
Who Poisoned Hetty	Suspicion Aroused.
Duncan ?	Dark Deeds.
Man from Manchester.	Riddlee Read.
A Detective's Triumphs	The Mystery of Jamaica Terrace.

By Mrs. ANNIE EDWARDES.
A Point of Honour. | Archie Lovell.By M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.
Felicia. | Kitty.By EDWARD EGGLESTON.
Roxy.By G. MANVILLE FENN.
The New Mistress. | The Tiger Lily.
Witness to the Dead. | The White Virgin.By PERCY FITZGERALD.
Bella Donna. | Second Mrs. Tillotson.
Never Forgotten. | Seventy-five Brooke
Folly. | Street.
Fatal Zero. | The Lady of Brantome.By P. FITZGERALD and others.
Strange Secrets.By ALBANY DE FONBLANQUE.
Filthy Laure.By R. E. FRANCELIN.
Glympia. | King or Knave ?
One by One. | Romances of the Law.
A Real Queen. | Ropes of Sand.
Queen Cophetua. | A Dog and his Shadow.By HAROLD FREDERIC.
Seth's Brother's Wife. | The Lawton Girl.Prefaced by Sir BARTLE FRERE.
Pandurang Hari.By HAIN FRISWELL.
One of Two.By EDWARD GARRETT.
The Capel Girls.By GILBERT GAUL.
A Strange Manuscript.By CHARLES GIBBON:
Robin Gray. | In Honour Bound.
Fancy Free. | Flower of the Forest.
For Lack of Gold. | The Braes of Yarrow.
What will World Say ? | The Golden Shaft.
In Love and War. | Of High Degree.
For the King. | By Mead and Stream.
In Pastures Green. | Loving a Dream.
Queen of the Meadow. | A Hard Knot.
A Heart's Problem. | Heart's Delight.
The Dead Heart. | Blood-Money.By WILLIAM GILBERT.
Dr. Anstin's Guests. | The Wizard of the
James Duke. | Mountain.By ERNEST GLANVILLE.
The Lost Heiress. | The Fossilicker.
A Fair Colonist.By Rev. S. BARING GOULD.
Red Spider. | Eve.By HENRY GREVILLE.
A Noble Woman. | Niskanor.By CECIL GRIFFITH.
Corinthia Marazion.By SYDNEY GRUNDY.
The Days of his Vanity.By JOHN HABBERTON.
Bruston's Bayon. | Country Luck.By ANDREW HALLIDAY.
Every-day Papers.By Lady DUFFUS HARDY
Paul Wynter's Sacrifice.By THOMAS HARDY.
Under the Greenwood Tree.By J. BERWICK HARWOOD
The Tenth Earl.

TWO-SHILLING NOVELS—continued.

By JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Garth.
Ellice Quentin.
Fortune's Fool.
Miss Cadogna.
Sebastian Stroms.
Dust.

Beatrix Bendorph.
Love—or a Name.
David Poindexter's Dis-
appearance.
The Spectre of the
Camera.

By Sir ARTHUR HELPS.

Ivan de Biron.

By G. A. HENTY.

Rujab the Juggler.

By HENRY HERMAN.

A Leading Lady.

By HEADON HILL.

Zambra the Detective.

By JOHN HILL.

Treason Felony.

By Mrs. CASHEL HOEY.

The Lover's Creed.

By Mrs. GEORGE HOOPER.

The House of Raby.

By TIQHE HOPKINS.

'Twixt Love and Duty.

By Mrs. HUNGERFORD.

A Maiden all Forlorn.
In Durance Ville.
Marvel.
A Mental Struggle.
A Modern Circe.

Lady Verner's Flight.
The Red House Mystery
The Three Graces.
Unsatisfactory Lover.
Lady Patty.

By Mrs. ALFRED HUNT.

Thornicroft's Model.

That Other Person.

Self-Condemned.

The Leadon Casket.

By JEAN INGELOW.

Fated to be Free.

By WM. JAMESON.

My Dead Self.

By HARRIETT JAY.

The Dark Colleen.

Queen of Connaught.

By MARK KERSHAW.

Colonial Facts and Fictions.

By R. ASHE KING.

A Drawn Game.

The Wearing of the
Green.

Paselec's Slave.

Bell Barry.

By EDMOND LEPELLETIER.

Madame Sans-Genes.

By JOHN LEYS.

The Lindsay's.

By E. LYNN LINTON.

Patricie Kemball.
The World Well Lost.
Under which Lord?
Faeton Carew.
'My Love!
Ione.

The Atonement of Leam
Dundas.
With a Silken Thread.
Rebel of the Family.
Sewing the Wind.
The One Too Many.

By HENRY W. LUCY.

Gideon Fleycce.

By JUSTIN MCCARTHY.

Dear Lady Dindain.
Waterdale Neighbours.
My Enemy's Daughter.
A Fair Saxon.
Linley Rochford.
Miss Misanthrope.

Camicia.
Donna Quixote.
Maid of Athens.
The Comet of a Season.
The Dictator.
Red Diamonds.

By HUGH MACCOLL.

Mr. Stranger's Sealed Packet.

By GEORGE MACDONALD.

Heather and Snow.

By AGNES MACDONELL.

Quaker Cousins.

By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

The Evil Eye.

Lost Rose.

By W. H. MALLOCK.

A Romance of the Nine-
teenth Century.

The New Republic.

By FLORENCE MARRYAT.

Open Sesame!

Fighting the Air.

A Harvest of Wild Oats.

Written in Fire.

By J. MASTERMAN.

Half-a-dozen Daughters.

By BRANDER MATTHEWS.

A Secret of the Sea.

By L. T. MEADE.

A Soldier of Fortune.

By LEONARD MERRICK.

The Man who was Good.

By JEAN MIDDLEMASS.

Touch and Go.

Mr. Dorillion.

By Mrs. MOLESWORTH.

Hathercourt Rectory.

By J. E. MUDDOCK.

Stories Weird and Won-
derful.

From the Bosom of the
Deep.

The Dead Man's Secret.

By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

A Model Father.

Joseph's Coat.

Coals of Fire.

Val Strange.

Old Blazer's Hero.

The Way of the World.

Cynic Fortune.

A Life's Attoement.

By the Gate of the Sea.

A Bit of Human Nature.

First Person Singular.

Bob Martin's Little Girl

Time's Revenges.

A Wasted Crime.

In Direct Peril.

Mount Despair.

By MURRAY and HERMAN.

One Traveller Returns.

The Bishops' Bible.

Paul Jones's Alias.

By HENRY MURRAY.

A Game of Bluff.

A Song of Sixpence.

By HUME NISBET.

'Ball Up!'

Dr. Bernard St. Vincent

By W. E. NORRIS.

Saint Anna's.

By ALICE O'HANLON.

The Unforeseen.

Obance? or Fate?

By GEORGES OHNET.

Dr. Rameau.

A Weird Gift.

A Last Love.

By Mrs. OLIPHANT.

Whiteladies.

The Greatest Heiress in
England.

The Primrose Path.

Dr. Rameau.

By Mrs. ROBERT O'REILLY.

Phoebe's Fortunes.

By OUIDA.

Held in Bondage.

Strathmore.

Obandos.

Idalla.

Under Two Flags.

Cecil Castlemaine's Gage

Tricotrin.

Puck.

Folle Farine.

A Dog of Flanders.

Pascarel.

Signe.

Princess Napraxine.

In a Winter City.

Ariadne.

Friendship.

Two Lit. Wooden Shoes.

Moths.

Bimbi.

Pipistrello.

A Village Commune

Wanda.

Othmar.

Frescoes.

In Maremma.

Gulderoy.

Ruffino.

Syrilo.

Santa Barbara.

Two Offenders.

Ouida's Wisdom, Wit,
and Fathos.

By MARGARET AGNES PAUL

Gentle and Simple.

By C. L. PIRKIS.

Lady Lovelace.

By EDGAR A. POE.

The Mystery of Marie Roget.

By Mrs. CAMPBELL PRAED

The Romance of a Station.

The Soul of Countess Adrian.

Outlaw and Lawmaker.

Christina Chard

By E. C. PRICE.

Valentine.

Mrs. Lancaster's Rival.

The Foreigners.

Gerald.

By RICHARD PRYCE.

Miss Maxwell's Affections.

TWO-SHILLING NOVELS—continued.

By JAMES PAYN.

Sentinel's Tutor.
Murphy's Master.
A County Family.
At Her Mercy.
Cecil's Trust.
The Cliffards of Clyffe.
The Foster Brothers.
Fond Dead.
The Best of Husbands.
Walter's Word.
Halves.
Fallen Fortunes.
Humorous Stories.
£200 Reward.
A Marina Residence.
Mirk Abbey.
By Proxy.
Under One Roof.
High Spirits.
Carlyon's Year.
From Exile.
For Cash Only.
Kit.
The Canon's Ward.

The Talk of the Town.
Holiday Tasks.
A Perfect Treasure.
What He Oost Her.
A Confidential Agent.
Glow-worm Tales.
The Burnt Million.
Sunny Stories.
Lost Sir Massingherd.
A Woman's Vengeance.
The Family Scapegrace.
Gwendolline's Harvest.
Like Father, Like Son.
Married Beneath Him.
Not Wood, hut Won.
Less Black than We're
Painted.
Some Private Views.
A Grape from a Thorn.
The Mystery of Mir-
bridge.
The Word and the Will.
A Prince of the Blood.
A Trying Patient.

By CHARLES READE.

It is Never Too Late to
Mend.
Christie Johnstone.
The Double Marriage.
Put Yourself in His
Place
Love Me Little, Love
Me Long.
The Cloister and the
Hearth.
The Course of True
Love.
The Jilt.
The Autobiography of
a Thief.

A Terrible Temptation.
Foul Play.
The Wandering Heir.
Hard Cash.
Singleheart and Double-
face.
Good Stories of Men and
other Animals.
Peg Woffington.
Griffith Gaunt.
A Perilous Secret.
A Simpleton.
Readiana.
A Woman-Hater.

By Mrs. J. H. RIDDELL.

Weird Stories.
Fairy Water.
Her Mother's Darling.
The Prince of Wales's
Garden Party.

The Uninhabited House.
The Mystery In Palace.
Gardens.
The Nun's Curse.
Idle Tales.

By AMELIE RIVES.

Barbara Doring.

By F. W. ROBINSON.

Women are Strange.

The Hands of Justice.

By JAMES RUNCIMAN.

Skippers and Shellbacks.
Grace Balmaln's Sweetheart.

Schools and Scholars.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL.

Round the Galley Fire.
On the Fo'ksle Head.
In the Middle Watch.
A Voyage to the Cape.
A Book for the Kam-
monk.
The Mystery of the
'Ocean Star.'

The Romance of Jenny
Harlowe.
An Ocean Tragedy.
My Shipmate Louise.
Alone on Wide Sea.
The Good Ship 'Mo-
heck'.
The Phantom Death.

By DORA

A Country Sweetheart.

RUSSELL.

By GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

Gaslight and Daylight.

By JOHN SAUNDERS.

Gay Waterman.
The Two Dreamers.

The Lion in the Path.

By KATHARINE SAUNDERS.

Joan Merryweather.
The High Mills.
Heart Salvage.

Sebastian.
Margaret and Eliza-
beth.

By GEORGE R. SIMS.

The Ring o' Bells.
Mary Jane's Memoirs.
Mary Jane Married.
Tales of To-day.
Dramas of Life.
Tinkletop's Crime.

My Two Wives.
Zeph.
Memoirs of a Landlady.
Scenes from the Show.
The 10 Commandments.
Dagonet Aboard.

By ARTHUR SKETCHLEY.

A Match in the Dark.

By HAWLEY SMART.

Without Love or License.
The Plunger.
Beatrice and Benedick.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

The Mysteries of Heron
Dyke.
The Golden Hoop.
Hoodwinked.
By Devious Ways.

By ALAN ST. AUBYN.

A Fellow o' Trinity.
The Junier Dean.
Master of St. Benedict's

To His Own Master.
Orchard Damerel.
In the Face of the World.

By R. A. STERNDALE.

The Afghan Knife.
By R. LOUIS STEVENSON.

New Arabian Nights.

By BERTHA THOMAS.

Crossida.
Fron'd Malsie.

The Violin-Player.

By WALTER THORNBURY.

Tales for the Marines.

Old Stories Retold.

By T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE

Diamond Cut Diamond.

By F. ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

Like Ships upon the
Sea.

Anne Furness.
Mabel's Progress.

By ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

Fren Frohmann.

The Land-Leaguers.

Marion Fay.

The American Senator

Kept in the Dark.

Mr. Scarborough's
Family.

John Caddigate.

Golden Lion of Granpers

The Way We Live Now.

By J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

Farnell's Folly.

By IVAN TURGENIEFF, &c.

Stories from Foreign Novelists.

By MARK TWAIN.

A Pleasure Trip on the
Continent.

Life on the Mississippi.

The Gilded Age.

The Prince and the
Pauper.

Ruckleberry Finn.

A Yankee at the Court
of King Arthur.

Mark Twain's Sketches.

The \$1,000,000 Bank-
Note.

Tom Sawyer.

A Tramp Abroad.

Stolen White Elephant.

By C. C. FRASER-TYTLER.

Mistress Judith.

By SARAH TYTLER.

The Bride's Pass.

The Huguenot Family.

Buried Diamonds.

The Blackhall Ghosts.

St. Mungo's City.

What She Came Through

Lady Bell.

Beauty and the Beast.

Nohlesse Oblige.

Citoyenne Jacqueline.

Disappeared.

By ALLEN UPWARD.

The Queen against Gweo.

Prince of Balfistan.

By AARON WATSON and LILLIAS
WASSERMANN.

The Marquis of Carabas.

By WILLIAM WESTALL.

Trust-Money.

By Mrs. F. H. WILLIAMSON.

A Child Widow.

By J. S. WINTER.

Cavalry Life.

Regimental Legends.

By H. F. WOOD.

The Passenger from Scotland Yard.

The Englishman of the Rue Cain.

By Lady WOOD.

Sabina.

By CELIA PARKER WOOLLEY

Rachel Armstrong; or, Love and Theology.

By EDMUND YATES.

The Forlorn Hope.

Castaway.

Land at Last.

By I. ZANGWILL.

Ghetto Tragedies.

